

Brooke House Day School

Croft Road, Cosby, Leicester LE9 1SE

Inspection dates

21–23 June 2016

Overall effectiveness

Good

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| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Good |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Outstanding |
| Outcomes for pupils | Good |
| Early years provision | Good |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The quality of teaching is good across the school and enables pupils to make good progress in their learning. The most able pupils make outstanding progress in most of their GCSE subjects.
- Teachers use their excellent subject knowledge well to devise lessons which interest and motivate pupils. Learning is enhanced by the respectful and productive relationships teachers foster with their pupils
- Senior leaders and staff ensure that children in the early years make good progress in developing independence and their communication and language skills. The children are prepared well for the transition to key stage 1.
- The principal and senior leaders monitor the quality of teaching closely and regularly. They implement well thought out plans which have brought about improvements to teaching.
- Pupils' behaviour and personal development are outstanding. They are self-confident, respectful and committed to the school's values.
- The school's curriculum has improved since the previous inspection. The principal has ensured that the range of subjects and activities offered has kept pace with the developing needs and interests of pupils of all ages, including pupils in key stage 4.
- Staff make good provision for the small number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, these pupils make good progress.
- The school provides a safe and secure environment. Regular training ensures that staff understand and implement the school's safeguarding policies consistently.
- The school is well led. The principal, who is also the proprietor, has ensured that the school meets all the independent school standards.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching does not consistently challenge pupils to extend and deepen their knowledge and understanding in order for them to make outstanding progress.
- School leaders' evaluations of pupils' academic achievements over time are not sufficiently robust. Leaders do not have a secure enough understanding of pupils' achievements over time. This hinders the school's ambitions to secure outstanding outcomes for pupils.
- There is some inconsistency in the results that pupils attain in their GCSE examinations.
- Arrangements for the monitoring and evaluation of staff performance do not focus consistently on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and progress over time.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Share the best practice in teaching and learning, so that all staff are able to devise activities which challenge different groups of pupils consistently well.
- Increase the consistency of pupils' results across their GCSE subjects.
- Strengthen assessment arrangements so that leaders and managers have a stronger understanding of how well pupils are progressing from their starting points in comparison to other pupils nationally.
- Increase the effectiveness of the arrangements for the appraisal of staff by ensuring that evaluations of teachers' performance are linked to assessments of pupils' progress over time.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The principal, supported well by senior leaders, has ensured that the school meets all the independent school standards.
- The principal demonstrates drive and determination in ensuring that pupils are happy and safe in school and make good progress in their learning. Dedicated staff share her commitment to helping pupils make progress in their personal and academic development.
- Senior leaders and staff have an excellent understanding of the personal characteristics and learning needs of pupils. They celebrate success and motivate pupils to want to improve their achievements.
- The principal is visible around the school at all times. She has high expectations of staff and ensures that they carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively. As a result, the quality of teaching is good and teachers fulfil any additional responsibilities which they are given to a high standard.
- Senior leaders have a systematic approach to the monitoring, evaluation and development of school policies and ensure that all staff implement these policies consistently.
- The training provided for staff reflects the school's improvement priorities. Increased opportunities are being provided for staff to develop links with other schools and networks to help them further strengthen their practice.
- The school's broad curriculum enables all pupils to experience all of the required areas of learning. As the school has extended its age range to include pupils at key stage 4, the curriculum has kept pace with their needs. This includes opportunities for pupils to study an appropriate range of GCSE subjects.
- The school provides a good range of after-school clubs and activities. These enable pupils to pursue personal interests or to extend and deepen their learning; for example, by studying additional mathematics in key stage 4.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity effectively across the school community. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are provided with the support and challenge required to enable them to succeed. Pupils develop a strong commitment to the school community and are respectful and considerate of each other.
- Staff promote pupils' spiritual and cultural development particularly strongly through visits to the theatre, concerts, museums, and to places of worship representing a range of religious beliefs. In informal discussion and in their contributions to lessons, pupils demonstrate maturity as well as respect for the variety of lifestyles experienced in the wider community.
- The school also ensures that pupils have a broad understanding of British culture and values. Pupils in Years 9 and 10 said that they were particularly proud of the contributions they had made to a recent debate with pupils from other schools at the Houses of Parliament.
- The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils understand the challenges and opportunities within the wider community and are prepared well to move on to further studies and future employment.
- Staff provide pupils with impartial advice about the range of careers and further qualifications available to them when they leave the school. Parents and visitors to the school also provide good information based on their own specialist expertise.
- Communication between staff and parents is strong. Parents are well informed about their children's progress. The parents who completed the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent view, are almost all entirely positive about the quality of the school's work, its care for their children and the good academic progress that pupils make.
- School leaders use an effective system of assessment to strengthen their understanding of pupils' academic achievement over time. However, they do not yet have a sufficiently robust understanding of how well pupils have progressed from their individual starting points. Nor do they compare the progress that pupils make at the school against national progress information. This weakens the effectiveness of self-evaluation in driving further improvements, particularly with regard to the pupils' achievement. It also hinders the effectiveness of the school's appraisal arrangements.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The principal, who is also the proprietor, takes responsibility for overseeing all aspects of monitoring and evaluation of the school's provision and outcomes. The school's senior leadership team provides good support for these activities.

- The school has recently employed the services of an education consultant to provide an accurate independent view of the school's provision and outcomes. The principal has incorporated findings from this review appropriately into the school's development planning arrangements.
- The principal has rightly identified, within the school's development plan, the need for more formalised arrangements for the management of staff performance. These new arrangements are still at an early stage.
- At present, arrangements for the evaluation of staff performance do not link well enough to evaluations of the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and progress over time. Achievement is not always maximised because leaders do not set clear expectations of the amount of progress expected over time from pupils' individual starting points.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are very effective. Staff demonstrate a high level of commitment to the safety and well-being of all pupils. All staff are trained to the required standard in safeguarding, first aid, risk assessment and fire safety. Procedures for the recruitment of staff are thorough and comply with the latest requirements.
- All staff are familiar with the latest government guidance on protecting children from abuse and exploitation, including from the risks associated with child sexual exploitation and radicalisation.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The good quality of teaching enables pupils to make good progress in their learning throughout the school.
- Teachers demonstrate excellent subject knowledge and they communicate this well in their presentations to pupils and when they are answering pupils' questions. Pupils have confidence in their teachers and value their advice.
- Teachers strive to help pupils improve their skills in reading, writing and numeracy across the full range of subjects studied. Pupils willingly apply their literacy and numeracy skills accurately in all tasks and activities. The quality of teachers' monitoring of written work is consistently good.
- Teachers plan effective lessons that interest and engage pupils. They make the learning intentions for individual lessons clear to pupils. As a result, pupils understand how the tasks and activities that have been set for them will enable them to make progress.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are respectful, relaxed and supportive. Pupils engage very well in class discussions and the majority express their views and opinions confidently. In a mixed-age Year 9 and 10 politics lesson, for example, pupils presented opposing views about current news items. Pupils listened carefully to each other's ideas and commented positively but critically on the range of views presented.
- Teachers understand the learning needs of individual pupils. They use assessment information well to ensure that the tasks set provide sufficient challenge to move their learning forward. However, they do not set longer-term targets, based on pupils' different starting points, to help them ensure that pupils make outstanding progress over time.
- They also use their assessments well to identify the small number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They give appropriate support and provide these pupils with tasks and activities which enable them to make good progress.
- Pupils are taught effectively to organise their work independently or to collaborate successfully with their peers. Teachers monitor the work of the class and intervene as required to clarify any misunderstandings or to provide suitable feedback to pupils about the quality of their work.
- Pupils in a mixed-age English lesson, for example, were encouraged to develop the tone and atmosphere created in their Gothic horror stories as a result of high-quality questioning by their teacher, and reminders about the richness of vocabulary available to them. Their good understanding of how to convey the eeriness or mystery of the setting was evident in their writing.
- Teachers mostly provide suitable feedback to pupils about the quality of the work in their books, in line with the school's policy. Where marking is most effective, it makes a clear difference to pupils' learning because the pupils have been given the precise advice they need to make the necessary improvements. On occasions, the marking is not precise enough to ensure that pupils know exactly what is required of them to achieve the required progress.
- The school has an effective system for assessing and recording pupils' progress. Teachers are improving their confidence in the use of the system and working well together to ensure that assessment is accurate and supported by appropriate evidence.

- Teachers challenge pupils to think carefully about their oral answers and to develop greater detail in their written work. However, they do not consistently challenge pupils to use the full range of ideas, vocabulary and grammar which would demonstrate an outstanding response in both their oral and written work. As a result, they sometimes restrict pupils' expectations of what constitutes an outstanding answer.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils' attitudes to their work are exemplary. They are appreciative of the range and variety of opportunities that they experience at the school, including the activities available to them after school. The strong relationships and care for individual pupils enable them to try new experiences and build their self-esteem.
- The consistently high level of support provided by the school enables pupils to develop self-confidence. Some pupils take a little more time than others to develop this confidence but the support provided by staff and other pupils encourages them to make an increasing contribution to lessons and school activities.
- At the time of the inspection, younger pupils had recently taken part in a residential visit to Penzance. Older pupils were preparing for a similar visit to Scotland. Pupils in Year 11 spoke warmly of the fun and pleasure of taking part in similar trips in previous years. Through these types of activities pupils experience a sense of community and responsibility which they reflect in their positive relationships with each other.
- Staff ensure that levels of supervision are high within the premises and around the playground. Pupils are confident that there is always someone on hand should they require help.
- Pupils understand how to stay safe. They appreciate the knowledge and understanding they have gained through lessons focusing on age-appropriate topics such as e-safety, extremism, the dangers of substance abuse, and developing healthy relationships.
- Pupils state that bullying is extremely rare. The school's behaviour records support this view. Staff are well trained to manage any risks to pupils' safety and well-being, and act promptly to deal with any concerns.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding in lessons and around the school.
- The pupils' outstanding behaviour and their exemplary attitudes to learning are based on warm, respectful relationships with staff. Pupils contribute willingly to the development of the school, for example in their roles as prefects or by taking part in the school council.
- Pupils are interested in their work and engage in tasks and activities with excellent concentration. There is no distracting behaviour during lessons and pupils of all ages are able to concentrate, fully, on their work. The great majority complete the work set by their teachers to a high standard and are rightly proud of their achievements.
- Pupils listen very attentively to the ideas presented by teachers and by their peers. They express their views confidently but do so in a considerate manner which is respectful of others.
- Pupils are very proud of their work and of the progress they are making. Pupils in a life skills lesson, for example, were keen to talk about their ideas for their cake-making task and the quality of the teamwork demonstrated to achieve their finished products.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school and in the playground is excellent. They treat the premises and equipment with respect and move around the school sensibly and considerately.
- The attendance of pupils is in line with the national average. There are no unauthorised absences or persistent absentees.

Outcomes for pupils are good

- The work in books, the school's assessment information and pupils' results in national assessments and the school's own assessments indicate that pupils make at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The most able pupils make exceptional progress and achieve standards which are well above those expected for their ages in English and mathematics.
- Pupils at key stage 1 make good progress with problem-solving in mathematics because teachers plan activities well to ensure that they challenge pupils sufficiently. Teachers base their planning on good assessment of pupils' learning in previous lessons.

- Pupils continue to develop and apply their mathematical skills very effectively as they progress through key stages 2 and 3. They are able, for example, to interpret graphs accurately in science or to adjust ratios when measuring out ingredients. The work in pupils' books reflects the good progress that they make, for example in securing a sound understanding of numbers and shapes and in their ability to interpret and solve mathematical problems, including algebraic and statistical problems.
- All pupils read well and the majority write accurately. Pupils in key stage 1 develop good understanding of the link between letters and the sounds they make. As they progress through key stage 2 they develop fluency in their reading and the ability to interpret meaning in the text they read. Pupils in key stage 3 enjoy reading and the majority read for pleasure, choosing their own books carefully across a variety of genres as they develop secure reading skills.
- Pupils particularly enjoy creative writing in English as they progress through key stage 3. They learn to apply the basic rules of grammar, spelling and punctuation successfully across the full range of subjects studied.
- The most able pupils make excellent progress in English and mathematics, in response to the high levels of challenge in the work provided for them. In a mathematics lesson, for example, the teacher challenged higher achieving pupils to tackle questions of theoretical probability successfully as an extension to their earlier work interpreting positive and negative correlations.
- The small number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress as a result of their teachers' sensitive, well-planned support and encouragement. They are provided with sufficient time to complete their work and to successfully develop their basic literacy and numeracy skills. Over time, they make good progress in closing the gaps in their knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils, at the end of Year 11 in recent years, have achieved good GCSE results, including in English, mathematics, sciences, and information and communications technology, together with a range of humanities, arts and creative subjects.
- The GCSE coursework in art displayed in the school is of a high standard. It demonstrates pupils' wide range of skills and techniques across a range of media. Pupils have presented their work using paint, textiles and three-dimensional objects reflecting highly personalised responses to the tasks set.
- Pupils' achievements extend beyond external examinations in academic and practical subjects. Pupils are proud of their achievements, for example, in horticulture, cooking, drama productions and sports activities.
- The school prepares pupils very well for the next stage in their education. All pupils leaving from Year 11 this summer, for example, have enrolled for further studies in local sixth forms. They are well prepared because they have the confidence, communication skills and knowledge, skills and understanding to make the most of the future opportunities available to them.

Early years provision

is good

- Children enter the school's early years provision at different times. There is a spectrum of needs and abilities in their skills on entry to either the Nursery or Reception. During their time in the school's early years classes children make good progress, particularly in the Reception class.
- Staff have ensured that a wide programme of activities is provided to meet the personal, social, emotional and physical needs of children. Staff planning sometimes focuses on the activities provided rather than identifying the learning and personal development outcomes that they expect children to achieve through the activities. As a result, children do not all make the progress they could.
- Staff have a good understanding of how children learn through play and have created an environment which enables children to progress well. Children engage well in activities, demonstrating good behaviour and cooperation. They also make good progress in the development of their independence.
- Children acquire good basic skills in communication and language. They develop their early writing skills effectively, applying their increasing knowledge of phonics (the sounds that letters make). Staff prepare children well for entry into Year 1, either at Brooke House or elsewhere.
- Relationships between staff and the children are strong and result in an environment which is relaxed and calm. Children enjoy the activities provided for them and they learn to concentrate well.
- Records of children's learning journeys across the early years provision indicate that almost all children attain the standards expected for their age. Some make rapid progress and exceed expectations for their age.
- Staff benefit from a good working partnership with other schools and the local authority's early years service. This enables the school to keep up to date with its practice and provision.

- Staff communicate daily with parents and ensure that they work effectively together to address any concerns or emerging needs for individual children. Parents contribute to the initial assessment of children's starting points and are encouraged to share their observations and judgements about children's continuing development.
- The school meets the statutory requirements for the early years provision. Staff are suitably qualified and trained in all required aspects of their roles, including safeguarding and paediatric first aid. The principal works closely with the early years practitioner to monitor the impact of teaching on children's personal development and their progress towards the early learning goals.
- Senior leaders have prepared suitable plans to extend the role of the early years practitioner in monitoring the quality of teaching and the assessment of children's attainment and progress.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 135185 |
| Inspection number | 10008561 |
| DfE registration number | 855/6023 |

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

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| Type of school | Primary and secondary day school |
| School status | Independent school |
| Age range of pupils | 3–16 years |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 97 |
| Number of part time pupils | 0 |
| Proprietor | Private Educare Ltd |
| Chair | Joy Parker |
| Principal | Joy Parker |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £6,900 to £8,400 |
| Telephone number | 01162 867372 |
| Website | www.brookehousedayschool.co.uk |
| Email address | brookehouseschool@tiscali.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 17 March 2010 |

Information about this school

- Brooke House Day School is a non-selective independent school in Cosby, near Leicester. It is located in the premises of a former primary school and a converted detached house which is located on the opposite side of the road.
- The school is registered to admit up to 100 day pupils in the age range three to 16 years. Pupils enter the school at different ages, not exclusively into the primary-aged classes. The school has admitted pupils aged 14 to 16 years since 2013.
- There are currently 97 pupils on roll. There are no pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan or a statement of special educational needs. A small number of pupils have special educational needs.
- The school does not use the services of any alternative providers.
- The school aims to 'help children to gain confidence, raise their self-esteem and value their own personal worth, while encouraging them to achieve a sound academic education which will allow them to realise their full potential'.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning, and looked at samples of pupils' work, across the full age-range of the school.
- They met with the principal, who is also the proprietor, and with members of staff with management and teaching responsibilities. They considered responses to questionnaires submitted by four members of staff.
- The inspectors attended a meeting of the school council. They met with a group of pupils and spoke informally with a number of other pupils.
- They considered 35 responses to Ofsted's online 'Parent View' questionnaire.
- The inspectors scrutinised a number of school policies, procedures and records in order to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

David Young, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Aileen King

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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