

Brookfield Junior School

Swallow Road, Larkfield, Aylesford, Kent ME20 6PY

Inspection dates

21–22 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The recently appointed executive headteacher has swiftly consolidated the new federation of Brookfield infant and junior schools. Since taking on the role, she has focused sharply on ensuring that teaching and learning are good.
- Governors are very well informed; they provide a high level of support and challenge to the school.
- Good teaching and high expectations of what pupils can accomplish during lessons enable most pupils to make good progress in their learning.
- Assessment information is used effectively and work is generally well matched to pupils' abilities. However, this is not consistently the case for the most able pupils, so their progress is not always as good as it should be.
- Pupils' personal development is good. They relate very well to adults and their peers. Pupils enjoy the opportunities they have to take responsibility. They are proud of their school and treat one another with care and consideration.
- Middle leaders are beginning to fulfil their roles more effectively. Developing middle leadership is a high priority for the school.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and successfully meets pupils' needs.
- In 2017, outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics were broadly in line with the national average. Current work in books shows that outcomes are consistently good and improving further.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities achieve well. Timely intervention programmes and good support in lessons ensure that these pupils do well.
- Pupils' behaviour in and out of lessons is good. Rates of attendance have gone up in line with national figures. Parents are very supportive of the new federation and have confidence in the executive headteacher.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school, ensuring that pupils are educated in a safe and caring environment.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching further by ensuring that teachers:
 - have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve, especially the most able
 - use assessment information effectively to suitably challenge pupils and ensure that tasks are neither too hard nor too easy
 - consistently support pupils to secure high standards of handwriting and presentation.
- Increase the proportions of most able pupils reaching a high standard by:
 - providing tasks, activities and opportunities to challenge pupils in their learning and understanding
 - ensuring that teachers ask challenging questions that provoke a greater understanding and develop deeper learning.
- Develop the skills of middle leaders so that they can:
 - accurately evaluate teaching and learning, identifying how practice can be improved
 - hold teachers effectively to account for the progress of pupils and groups of pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The executive headteacher, who took up post in September, has ensured a smooth transition from a separate junior and infant school to a single federation. Parents and staff are rightly confident in her ability to bring about improvements. In the short time she has been in post, the executive headteacher has empowered governors, leaders, teachers and support staff to use their skills and knowledge to improve pupils' learning experiences.
- All at the school feel valued and are keen to be part of the school's success. Consequently, all staff support the school's aims, so that pupils can reflect the federation's name and 'flourish' in their learning and personal development.
- In addition to federating, the school has undergone a significant change of teaching staff. Five of the eight teachers joined the school in September. Consequently, the executive headteacher and new head of school have rightly focused sharply on developing good teaching practices and ensuring that pupils are making good progress.
- Leaders' determined focus on effective planning and meeting pupils' needs well has ensured that teaching is good. Accurate checks on classroom practice, useful feedback and a focus on teachers' expectations have brought about improvements since the beginning of term.
- Leaders ensure that teachers use assessment information effectively. Meetings to review pupils' progress are used well to make sure that pupils are where they should be in their learning. If any pupils are not doing as well as they should be, leaders ensure that they are well supported to catch up quickly.
- Middle leaders, many of whom are new in post, are passionate about improving learning in their areas of responsibility. They know that they need to develop their skills further to be fully effective. Leaders rightly recognise that the development of middle leaders is crucial in sustaining and building capacity in the school.
- Funding to support disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities is effectively targeted so that these pupils get the help that they need. Leaders work with teachers to monitor and evaluate interventions to ensure that they are helping pupils to catch up. This is appreciated by parents, one of whom said, 'My son gets the help he needs to keep up.'
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets pupils' needs. Leaders' work to involve pupils further in shaping the curriculum is already helping to stimulate pupils' interest. For example, Year 6 selected their class text, 'The Hobbit', as they wanted to learn through an exciting adventure.
- The positive changes to the science curriculum have resulted in pupils making more progress; pupils particularly appreciate the practical investigations and activities, which have helped them to understand and explore for themselves. Pupils also enjoy the opportunities offered in music and art. There is a good range of after-school activities including football, netball, table tennis and fashion.
- Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is supported well through

effective lessons, which are cleverly woven into other areas of the curriculum. Pupils regularly discuss social and moral issues such as 'What makes a good friend?' or 'How do different cultures celebrate Christmas?' as part of their learning in other subjects. Pupils are reflective in assemblies and appreciate the beliefs that different people have.

- The sport premium effectively provides pupils with greater opportunities to take part in sport and to enhance and develop the practical coaching skills of teachers. Pupils enjoy extra opportunities, such as cycling, and teachers appreciate learning new skills while working alongside qualified coaches, which they can then apply in their lessons.

Governance of the school

- Although the governing body is newly formed under the federation, most governors know the community well. Governors have rapidly identified the areas of strength in the school and those areas that need to be improved. Some of the immediate success has been the rapid improvement in attendance and the high-quality induction for new governors, which included a skills audit, leading to a detailed training programme.
- Governors support the school well and demand high-quality information on how good teaching is in the school and how much progress pupils are making. In so doing, they hold leaders effectively to account. Governors' primary focus is to improve the consistency of teaching given the number of new teachers. They think and act strategically and share in the ambition of enabling each child to achieve as well as they can.
- Governors appreciate the good-quality support they have received from the local authority, especially the guidance on the formation of the new 'Flourish' federation.
- Provision for managing the performance of staff is effective. Leaders' and teachers' targets reflect the needs of the school. Working with school leaders, they have been very proactive in making funds available for the development of less experienced teachers and middle leaders. There are transparent procedures in place to enable them to make informed decisions about any possible pay progression.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- A strong culture of safeguarding and care reflects the policies and procedures in place to make sure that pupils are safe. Detailed records ensure that all actions are followed up, and a family liaison officer works effectively with outside agencies to ensure that families have the necessary support to enable their children to attend school regularly and learn.
- Induction and ongoing training for staff and governors ensure that all adults are confident in dealing with any child protection issues that may arise. Pre-employment checks are rigorous, ensuring that all adults are vetted correctly.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers plan interesting lessons that engage pupils and capture their attention and interest. Their good subject knowledge ensures that the basic skills in literacy and numeracy are well taught.
- Teachers, supported by leaders, use assessment information well to plan activities that build on what pupils already know. As a result, the progress that pupils make in lessons is improving, as illustrated by work in books.
- Leaders have rightly identified that the needs of the most able pupils are not met consistently across the school. At times, tasks are too easy, so these pupils do not learn as much as they could. At other times, teachers' questioning does not encourage pupils to explain their reasoning and deepen their thinking. Although some pupils achieve the higher levels, leaders rightly recognise that more pupils are capable of this.
- The teaching of reading is good across the school. Pupils learn to decode complex words and understand the meaning of a range of texts. Recent changes to reading lessons have resulted in reading having a higher profile and pupils wanting to read for pleasure. Consequently, pupils are making even more progress.
- Reading interventions for pupils who find reading difficult are plentiful, enabling them to develop confidence and improve. Teachers use the school's annual book week and book fair to celebrate pupils' achievements with parents.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils who find learning more difficult. Occasionally, too much help is given so that these pupils are not suitably challenged in their learning. Teachers are working closely with teaching assistants to develop pupils' independence.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to discuss their work and articulate their answers. Through explaining their thinking and justifying their answers to one another, they are beginning to deepen their understanding. One pupil summed up why the pupils find that this helps their learning. 'We listen to and learn from one another – we make a great team.'
- In subjects such as science and computing, teachers provide practical activities so that pupils are involved in their learning. Opportunities such as the 'marble run', in which older pupils worked with pupils from the infant school, bring learning to life. Together, pupils designed a system of tubes to enable a marble to run from one point to another. Pupils found it fun, stimulating and full of problem-solving opportunities.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils enjoy the opportunities that the school provides for them to take responsibility, discuss emotions and feelings and debate subjects. Pupils take their roles as school councillors and 'eco' councillors very seriously. They are proud of the contributions they make to the school and the local community. This includes buddying with younger

pupils, saving energy and raising money for the local charities. Fundamental British values are developed well in assemblies and citizenship lessons. Year 6 pupils particularly liked the opportunity to debate the rule of law during a visit from a local magistrate.

- Pupils said that they feel safe because they trust the adults in school. 'You can always find an adult who will listen to you and help you,' one pupil commented. They said that they receive lessons on how to deal with conflict and can identify ways to deal with 'tricky' situations, such as times when they fall out with their friends. Parents agree that their children feel safe and are well cared for. Pupils regularly discuss how to stay safe online and articulate clearly what they need to do to protect themselves when using the internet.
- A few parents were concerned about bullying. Pupils understand what bullying is and acknowledged that sometimes it happens. However, they are adamant that it does not occur often and that staff members act quickly and effectively to resolve any issues. Checks on behaviour logs supported pupils' views.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well in class and around the school. Pupils show respect to their teachers and treat their friends with compassion and care. They have good attitudes to learning, work hard during lessons and are willing to help each other learn.
- Attendance has improved and is now in line with the national average. Behaviour is now managed consistently, and this approach has resulted in no exclusion since the beginning of term.
- Pupils demonstrate the school values, such as friendship and perseverance, in lessons. Occasionally, learning slows when pupils become distracted. Pupils who have specific emotional or learning needs are very well supported so that their impact on other pupils' learning is minimal.
- The vast majority of parents agree that behaviour is good. They recognise that pupils and staff work together to make the environment a positive place in which to learn. One parent commented, 'Teachers are fair and the children are kind. Everybody who visits the school sees our children behave well.'

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2017, the progress made by pupils in reading, writing and mathematics was close to that which was achieved nationally. Current progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics are consistently good for all classes, reflecting strong classroom practice throughout the school.
- Work seen in books across the school confirms that pupils are working at age-related expectations. The progress they have made since the beginning of the term in reading, writing and mathematics is at least good.
- Most groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those who have SEN

and/or disabilities make good progress and achieve well. Well-planned interventions support pupils so they catch up. Teachers and support staff work effectively together to meet pupils' needs. As a result, they are developing resilience and independence in their learning.

- Outcomes for the most able pupils are not as good as they should be. Leaders correctly recognise that more pupils should be working at the highest levels at the end of Year 6. Leaders' work to improve the teaching of these pupils is beginning to bring about better outcomes.
- Pupils are beginning to take pride in their work. The recent focus on standards, presentation and handwriting is bringing improvements, but these are not yet developed fully across all classes.

School details

Unique reference number	118869
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10037833

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	232
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jude Johnson
Executive Headteacher	Pauline Woods
Telephone number	01732 843667
Website	www.brookfield-jun.kent.sch.uk/
Email address	headteacher@brookfield-jun.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26– 27 September 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets the requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school federated with Brookfield Infant School in September 2017 to form the new 'Flourish' federation under the joint leadership of an executive headteacher.
- The executive headteacher was appointed in September 2017, as was the head of school and new special needs coordinator (SENCo). Five of the eight teaching staff members are also new to the school this academic year.
- The school is an average-sized junior school with eight classes.
- Most pupils come from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average, as is the proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum

expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons accompanied by the executive headteacher or head of school to observe pupils' learning.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, members of staff, pupils, a group of parents, members of the federated governing body and two representatives from the local authority.
- The inspector examined a wide range of documentation, including that relating to attendance, behaviour and exclusions, school improvement planning, assessment information, monitoring of teaching, minutes of governing body meetings, local authority reports and school policies relating to safeguarding.
- An inspector listened to pupils from Year 6 read and met formally with a group of pupils to discuss their learning, behaviour and safety. Inspectors evaluated pupils' work in books, displays of pupils' learning and the school's assessments of the progress that pupils are making.
- The lead inspector took into account the views of 82 parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and met a group of six parents.
- Account was also taken of 13 responses to the pupil questionnaires and 20 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Bill James, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Stephanie Scutter

Ofsted Inspector

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