

Brookfield Academy Trust

Chatsworth Road, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S40 3NS

Inspection dates

22–23 May 2018

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders, including governors, have not ensured that safeguarding arrangements are effective. Leaders do not always check that all staff are suitable to work with children. When concerns have been raised, the headteacher has been slow to take action. The presence of older pupils on site is not effectively monitored.
- Leaders and governors do not have an accurate view of the quality of education provided by the school. They do not evaluate the impact of their work and are unable to amend strategies accordingly.
- Leaders and governors have not ensured that the pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding are used well to raise these groups' outcomes.
- Governors and senior leaders are not effective at holding staff, including middle leaders, to account.
- Teachers do not routinely plan activities to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. The least able are not supported well and the most able are not consistently challenged.
- The leadership of the provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities has historically been weak.
- Disadvantaged pupils, the least able pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities make considerably slower progress than other pupils nationally in a range of subjects.
- The proportion of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, who are persistently absent is too high.
- Staff do not apply whole-school policies consistently.

The school has the following strengths

- The designated safeguarding lead (DSL), who leads on pastoral care, ensures that individual vulnerable pupils are supported effectively.
- There are pockets of strong teaching where the needs of different groups of pupils are met.
- Pupils receive effective careers education, information, advice and guidance.
- Pupils' attainment is above the national average for all pupils.
- Students make good progress in the sixth form. They are well supported to take their next steps in education, employment or training.
- Pupils' personal development is promoted well.
- Leaders amend the curriculum to suit pupils' needs.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and governors must urgently address the weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements by:
 - ensuring safer recruitment practices are followed and regularly checked for accuracy and compliance
 - implementing a rigorous protocol for monitoring the location of older pupils during the school day.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - all leaders and governors have an accurate view of the quality of education provided by the school
 - leaders plan strategically for sustained school improvement
 - leaders take swift action to tackle weaknesses when they are identified
 - governors and senior leaders evaluate the impact of leaders' work and amend strategies accordingly
 - leaders and governors hold all staff to account and challenge underperformance
 - senior leaders and governors regularly monitor and evaluate that the pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding are used effectively
 - senior leaders monitor the quality of provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, across the school, evaluate its impact on outcomes and attendance for this group of pupils and take action to improve the quality of their education
 - teachers consistently apply the whole-school assessment and feedback policy and the homework policy.
- Improve teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teachers routinely plan activities that meet the needs of different groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, by ensuring that the most able are sufficiently challenged and the least able are supported effectively
 - teachers plan activities that interest and motivate the least able pupils
 - pupils know how to improve their work and act on this advice
 - opportunities for teachers to share best practice are provided.
- Improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, those who have SEN and/or disabilities and the least able pupils.
- Reduce the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school, particularly disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities.

External reviews of governance and the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders' evaluation of the school is inaccurate. They have an over-generous view of the school's effectiveness. When weaknesses have been identified, leaders have been slow to respond to bring about the necessary improvements.
- Leaders have not taken effective action to tackle the areas identified as needing improvement at the last inspection in December 2014. Development plans identify the same priorities year after year because they have not been addressed effectively.
- Leaders do not routinely evaluate the impact of their work. This means that ineffective strategies are not amended.
- There is a lack of strategy in leaders' approach to school improvement. Leaders work in isolation and do not collaborate effectively to develop a joined-up approach for the good of the whole school. For example, pastoral leaders, who are responsible for the tutor programme, do not communicate with curriculum leaders to ensure that work to promote pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is complemented between these two areas.
- There has been weak leadership of the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities in recent years. A new SEN Coordinator was appointed in September 2017. Leaders commissioned an external review of this aspect of the school's work in October 2017. The SENCo has begun to act on its recommendations. For example, she has strengthened the statutory annual reviews for pupils who have an education, health and care plan. Considerable shortcomings in the provision for this group of pupils remain.
- Leaders do not have a strategic approach to the use of the pupil premium funding. They do not account for the spending of this considerable sum of money. They cannot evaluate its impact. Furthermore, they are unable to provide the information that governors need to hold leaders to account. The funding is not having its intended impact on disadvantaged pupils' outcomes, which are considerably below national averages.
- Similarly, leaders do not account for the use of the Year 7 catch-up funding. There is a lack of clarity about who is responsible for this aspect of the school's work. Leaders do not evaluate the impact of the funding.
- Senior leaders do not hold middle leaders to account effectively. There is inconsistency in senior leaders' expectations. For example, following the analysis of pupils' assessments, heads of weaker performing departments were asked to write action plans to tackle weaknesses. Senior leaders did not ensure that all middle leaders did so. Many of the plans that were written are vague and lack the precision to secure the necessary improvements. Similarly, senior leaders encouraged middle leaders to visit

other schools to learn from best practice but not all have done so. This lack of rigour in senior leadership is hindering school improvement.

- Leaders have not ensured that teachers consistently apply the school's assessment and feedback policy or the school's homework policy. Leaders are not effective at challenging staff when policies are not followed.
- The leadership of teaching, learning and assessment is improving. A new leader was appointed in September 2017. He has begun to evaluate the quality of provision across the school and to amend training opportunities to meet teachers' professional development needs. He recognises that there is much work to be done and plans are in place to support further improvements.
- Leaders have not ensured that the best teaching practice in the school is shared effectively.
- Leaders review the curriculum and amend it to meet individual pupils' needs. For example, some pupils in Year 11 follow alternative courses to GCSEs in English and mathematics. This means that pupils are provided with the opportunity to gain qualifications that are suitable for their ability. Leaders are keen to develop the curriculum further to meet the needs of the changing cohorts, for example by introducing more vocational courses in key stage 4. The curriculum offers a range of creative and artistic opportunities, including dance, drama and art.
- Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is promoted well in many different aspects of school life. Pupils learn about fundamental British values through assemblies and personal, social, health, and economic (PSHE) lessons. 'Drop down days', when pupils spend the day learning about pastoral issues, complement these activities. Pupils receive high-quality careers education, information, advice and guidance, and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Governance of the school

- Governors do not have an accurate picture of the quality of education provided by the school. They know what the school's strengths are but do not recognise its weaknesses, particularly in relation to the effectiveness of leadership and management and safeguarding arrangements.
- They have not made sure that recruitment practices follow statutory guidance. They have not taken action to rectify errors when weaknesses in practice have been identified.
- Governors have not ensured that they have the necessary information about the use of the pupil premium funding and the Year 7 catch-up funding. They have, therefore, been unable to challenge leaders to hold them to account for its use.
- Governors are committed to the school and keen to support its improvement. Meetings are well attended. Governors visit the school and conduct monitoring activities with leaders. For example, they visit the heads of the departments to which they are linked. These visits provide governors with information about the work that middle leaders are undertaking. However, governors do not use this information to challenge leaders effectively about the impact of their work on pupils' outcomes.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. Leaders and governors have not ensured that they follow the guidance issued by the Secretary of State. Leaders cannot be certain that all staff are suitable to work with children because they have not carried out all the necessary checks. When concerns about recruitment practices have been raised in the past, the headteacher and governors have not taken action to ensure that missing checks have been undertaken. They have not introduced a process to ensure that future recruitment practices follow the statutory guidance.
- Systems to monitor pupils' whereabouts during the school day are not secure. At the start of the day, pupils register formally and their attendance in lessons throughout the day is monitored. Absent pupils are followed up and checked. However, leaders do not monitor pupils in Year 11 as they come and go during the examination period. Similarly, they do not monitor students in Years 12 and 13 who leave and enter the site during the course of the day. Leaders therefore cannot be sure who is on site at any one time.
- The DSL who has particular responsibility for pastoral care is extremely knowledgeable about individual pupils and works tirelessly to meet their needs and to promote their well-being. She has implemented an effective system of record-keeping which details how pupils are monitored and the actions taken to support them. She works with a range of external agencies and makes referrals when necessary. She is tenacious in following up referrals so that pupils get the help they need quickly.
- Staff have received up-to-date and relevant training and understand their responsibilities to safeguard pupils. For example, they are well trained in recognising child sexual exploitation and know their legal duty to report concerns about pupils who may be at risk of female genital mutilation. They understand the specific safeguarding issues which are pertinent to the local area.
- The curriculum supports safeguarding arrangements. PSHE lessons cover a wide range of topics and issues related to safety and pupils' well-being. An extensive programme of assemblies complements these. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. For example, they understand how to protect themselves from the potential dangers of radicalisation, drugs, alcohol and grooming.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inconsistent across the school and within year groups and subjects.
- Teachers do not routinely plan lessons that meet the needs of different groups of learners. In many subjects, pupils work on the same tasks, regardless of their ability. Often the most able are not sufficiently challenged and the least able are not effectively supported. Teachers do not plan activities that interest and motivate the least able pupils.
- Teaching assistants do not consistently provide effective support to the pupils with whom they are working. Often, they do not have access to teachers' plans prior to lessons. Teaching assistants who made their views known to inspectors say that this

limits the degree to which they are able to help pupils.

- Teachers do not consistently apply the assessment and feedback policy. Pupils do not always understand how to improve their work.
- Not all teachers set homework in line with the school's policy. Many pupils' planners indicated that homework was rarely recorded.
- There are positive relationships between teachers and pupils that contribute to the effective promotion of learning.
- There are pockets of stronger teaching practice. These teachers use their subject knowledge to plan activities that interest and inspire pupils. Pupils say that clear explanations and demonstrations help them to understand how to produce high-quality work. For example, in a Year 9 dance lesson, pupils were motivated by the choice of music and activity. They participated with enthusiasm.
- Some teachers use discussion and questioning effectively to probe and deepen pupils' thinking. For example, in a history lesson, the teacher was observed encouraging pupils to consider different viewpoints about the impact of evacuation during the Second World War.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils do not always maintain positive attitudes towards their learning. When teaching is weaker, pupils do not consistently take pride in their work. For example, the less able pupils, and boys, do not routinely ensure that their presentation is as good as it can be.
- Punctuality declines as pupils grow older. The frequency in lateness increases considerably in Year 11.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. They understand what constitutes bullying. They say that some bullying happens in school but that it is dealt with effectively.
- Leaders have developed a culture where pupils feel confident to raise concerns and seek help and advice. Pupils know who they can speak to if they are worried or have problems. Pupils say they feel safe in the school.
- Pastoral support is strong. Pupils benefit from help to re-integrate when they return to school from absences as a result of ill health. Staff work hard to help pupils develop and maintain good mental health. Those in need are supported well. For example, a counsellor visits regularly and pupils access help via pre-planned appointments or 'drop-in' slots. The pastoral team monitors the personal development and welfare of pupils who attend alternative off-site provision.
- Pupils understand diversity. They are respectful of those who are different to themselves. Leaders encourage pupils to take responsibilities. For example, pupils have created a group to promote tolerance and understanding of LGBT+ across the school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Whole-school attendance has improved and was above the national average in 2017. Disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities also have improved rates of attendance. Nevertheless, the attendance of these two groups of pupils remains below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school has declined and was below the national average in 2017. The proportions of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities who are persistently absent has declined but it remains above average.
- 'The Bridge', the school's behaviour support and inclusion unit, is effective in helping pupils to avoid exclusions. Fixed-term exclusions are reducing and the proportion of pupils who are temporarily excluded from school is now below the national average. However, the proportion of pupils who are excluded permanently is likely to be above average. Disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities are disproportionately represented.
- Pupils' conduct around school and in the majority of lessons is good. When teaching does not meet pupils' needs, behaviour deteriorates. This sometimes results in pupils' disinterest in their learning and low-level disruption.
- The majority of pupils are proud to be members of the school. They speak positively about their school experiences.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils enter the school with attainment levels that are higher than those typical for their age. Pupils make average progress and so leave the school with attainment that is above the national average. In 2017, rates of progress improved compared to 2016.
- Disadvantaged pupils made much slower progress than that seen nationally in most subjects, including English and mathematics, in 2017. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who achieved a standard pass or a strong pass in these subjects was considerably below the national average. Leaders have not implemented an effective strategy for the use of the pupil premium funding.
- The least able pupils made particularly slow progress in all subjects except humanities, in 2017.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities continue to make slow progress in all subjects.
- Boys make slower progress than girls in most subjects.
- Current pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are making faster progress in most subjects than in the past. Younger pupils, in particular, are making better progress. However, disadvantaged pupils are not catching up quickly enough.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved a standard pass in English and mathematics in 2017 was considerably higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils who achieved a strong pass in these subjects was also much higher than the national

average.

- Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and the less able pupils, made stronger progress in humanities in 2017 compared to other subjects.
- Pupils receive high-quality careers education, information, advice and guidance. They are well informed about the opportunities available to them for the next steps. The proportion of pupils who move on to further education, employment or training is consistently above the national average.

16 to 19 study programmes

Inadequate

- The sixth form provision is inadequate because failings in whole-school safeguarding arrangements apply equally to this area of the school. Safeguarding is inadequate.
- Leaders have not ensured that the requirements of the 16-19 study programmes are met. Students do not routinely undertake work experience. However, some students arrange their own placements.
- Leaders' expectations of students' attendance are not high enough. Overall attendance is above the national average and students in Year 12 attend extremely well. However, attendance in Year 13 is lower than the national average.
- Teaching is good in the sixth form. Students enjoy their lessons, they are effectively challenged and make good progress. Students say that their teachers 'go above and beyond' to help them.
- The tutor programme provides a wide range of opportunities to prepare students for life beyond the sixth form. For example, students participate in mock interviews for university. Pastoral support is strong, and students receive high-quality careers education, information, advice and guidance. The proportion of students who move on to education, employment or training is consistently above the national average.
- Aspects of students' personal development are promoted well. For example, students appreciate the support they receive to care for their mental health.
- A small number of students need to re-sit GCSE English and mathematics. They make very good progress and typically improve on their previous grade.
- Retention rates in the sixth form are consistently above the national average.
- Students make good progress in the sixth form. In 2017, progress in academic courses increased and was above the national average. Boys made particularly strong progress. Current students, including those who are disadvantaged, are making faster progress than that seen in previous years.
- Students are keen and motivated. They support younger pupils through various activities such as mentoring and buddy reading.
- The sixth form leader recognises the provision's weaknesses. She is beginning to bring about the required improvements.

School details

Unique reference number	136548
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10048207

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1226
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	270
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jonathan Hardwick
Headteacher	Steve Edmonds
Telephone number	01246 568115
Website	www.brookfield.derbyshire.sch.uk
Email address	enquiries@brookfield.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3–4 December 2014

Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy in April 2011. It is a stand-alone academy.
- The school is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A very small proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan (EHC) plan is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and do not have an EHC plan is below average.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' achievement and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.
- A small number of pupils attend alternative off-site provision at Broomfield College.
- The school does not meet the requirements on the publication of information about the pupil premium funding, the Year 7 catch-up funding and the school's accessibility plan on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors scrutinised the school’s single central record and a sample of staff recruitment files.
- Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, other staff and members of the governing body. The lead inspector spoke by telephone to the school’s improvement adviser.
- Inspectors observed learning in 43 lessons, some jointly with senior leaders. They also visited five morning tutorial sessions.
- Inspectors looked at pupils’ work in lessons and in a sample of pupils’ books.
- Pupils’ behaviour was observed during lessons, at break time and at lunchtime. Inspectors also observed pupils’ learning and behaviour in tutorial periods. They visited ‘The Bridge’, the school’s support and isolation unit.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils from all year groups, in discussion groups and informally around the school. They also considered the 208 responses to the pupil survey.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including the school’s self-evaluation, its improvement plans, minutes of meetings of the governing body, information about the attainment and progress of all pupils, records relating to behaviour, and information on the school’s website. They evaluated the school’s pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding strategies.
- Inspectors considered the 103 responses to Parent View, Ofsted’s online survey, and the 96 free-text responses from parents and carers. They also considered an email communication from a parent. They considered the 48 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Deborah Mosley, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Christine Staley	Ofsted Inspector
Rachel Tordoff	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Bernadette Green	Ofsted Inspector
John Edwards	Ofsted Inspector
Linda Lyn-Cook	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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