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Mrs Fran Cracknell  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Cracknell

### **Short inspection of Brooklands School**

Following my visit to the school on 25 September 2018 with Louise Greatrex, Her Majesty's Inspector, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in October 2013.

### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since taking up post, you have set about bringing your vision for the school to life. Your determination to provide rich opportunities that promote pupils' well-being and high-quality learning, that helps pupils achieve very well, is the hallmark of your leadership. You engage your staff in this endeavour successfully. As a result, they are highly motivated and are committed to do their best for your pupils. Pupils, in turn, feel very well cared for and enjoy their learning. Parents, with very rare exceptions, are full of praise for the school and the difference it makes to their children's and to their family life.

You have developed effective monitoring and evaluation systems to check on the quality of teaching and learning and how well pupils progress towards their goals. As a result, you know very well the strengths and weaker areas of your school. Your next steps in developing communication with parents is to provide instant access to progress information through an on-line application.

You use the information you gather to refine pupils' learning plans. This ensures that the right combination of interventions such as speech and language and sensory therapies are put in place. As a result, you promote pupils' well-being and development very effectively, contributing to their very positive views of their experience in school. They thrive and love coming to school.

You have worked effectively with other senior leaders and the governing body to

identify, from your analysis of school performance, the most important things to do to improve the school further. With the governing body, you have successfully re-structured the senior leadership team to provide added capacity through additional leadership posts. This is contributing to the strong sense of accelerating progress towards the schools' priorities for improvement, sustaining and extending strong rates of progress in learning and promoting pupils' personal development.

By developing a sense of shared endeavour, staff feel motivated and valued. You have engendered in them a sense of professional confidence that helps them make a very strong contribution to pupils' development in their day-to-day work with pupils. The processes, so far, put in place clear, well-understood routes for progress. The sharper recording systems to check on pupils' achievement and development are successful. They enable staff to use their strong knowledge of pupils' needs to plan activities that engage pupils effectively and help them learn very well.

Pupils thrive. From their various starting points, the vast majority of pupils make strong progress towards their personal development goals and targets for learning in their education, health and care (EHC) plans. Pupils are proud of their learning and achievements. For example, pupils in a phonics group worked together to show they could recognise new letter combinations and sounds and identify the sounds in whole words. Their pride in their achievements was palpable. Similarly, students in the sixth form carried out their work-related learning activities around the school with a clear sense of pride. They revel in the responsibility they have been given. This contributes to pupils' positive attendance rates. Very rarely do they miss school, other than for unavoidable medical reasons.

Pupils like the staff. They say staff help them and they trust staff to help them if they have a problem or a concern. With very rare exceptions, parents reflect the extremely positive views of their children. Parents say their children are cared for well and feel safe. Several parents commented on how well the school is improving now, as the new leadership team introduces improvements. They say the school communicates with them effectively. One commented, 'The leadership of the school is amazing.'

You are now building quickly on the positive climate of care for pupils' well-being and learning across the school's community you have established. You have used your analysis of information to instigate important developments for further improvement. Because you recognise the need for a closer link between pupils' plans for learning and development and their target in their EHC plan, you are focusing the school's work on personalising the curriculum for pupils further.

You use progress meetings, visits to classrooms and scrutiny of pupils' work to gain an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching. Feedback and staff working together in teams help teachers plan activities that pupils find engaging and enjoyable. Teachers work effectively with other classroom staff, so that pupils are well supported and learn well. Pupils have frequent occasions to develop their learning and experiences in the community through ample trips and visits. Staff use

such visits to cement pupils' learning and provide opportunities to practise and reapply skills, for example through visits to the shops. Equally important for staff and pupils are the opportunities that such visits offer to develop and practise pupils' personal skills. For example, they interact with others in the wider community. Staff are adept at finding innovative ways to help pupils who are 'stuck' or who have misunderstood in their activities. Sometimes, however, staff miss opportunities to move pupils on, to stretch their thinking and deepen their understanding appropriately.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Working with your staff and governors, you ensure that the arrangements to safeguard pupils are fit for purpose. You ensure that all the required checks are carried out and carefully recorded to make sure that only suitable adults work with pupils. Staff receive regular training and update information about risks to pupils' well-being. This, alongside their very strong relationships with pupils, helps staff to keep a watchful eye out for any signs of abuse or neglect. Staff know what to do if they have any concerns. They understand that it is important that small concerns are recorded so that needs can be identified at an early stage. Leaders work with families, other appropriate agencies and teams to ensure they can quickly put in place the support when it is needed.

The site is well maintained and secure. Pupils respect their environment and move around it safely and with consideration for others. Staff welcome pupils on arrival and provide good natured careful supervision throughout the day. Pupils say they feel safe and very well cared for. Pupils trust their staff and know they can turn to them for help if they have a worry or concern. They enjoy coming to school and attend well. Other than for medical reasons, pupils are rarely absent. This contributes positively to their safety.

You ensure, carefully, that the curriculum keeps a firm focus on helping pupils to develop the knowledge and skills they need to keep safe. These range from learning to cross roads, training for independent travel and how to keep safe when they use the internet. Pupils learn that not everyone is a suitable friend. Learning about the benefits of physical activity, healthy eating and positive relationships contributes further to their well-being.

### **Inspection findings**

- Together, we considered how well the school has sustained and developed the quality of teaching, learning and assessment since the previous inspection. You have successfully worked with other senior leaders, staff and governors to put in place a refined system to record pupils' development and achievement. This helps parents understand how well their children are doing and how they can work with the school.
- You ensure that teaching teams make use of the information about pupils' progress to plan activities that are well-matched to pupils' needs. Pupils enjoy their learning. They engage in their lessons and try hard to improve their

learning. As a consequence, high proportions of pupils make good progress across a wide range of subjects of learning and personal development.

- You have worked closely, with staff and the whole school community, to develop the curriculum so that it reflects the greater flexibility needed to focus on each pupil's EHC plan targets for learning. As a result, pupils benefit from a combined range of learning activities, therapeutic support and opportunities for personal development. These are integrated very well and successfully promote pupils' learning and development through a holistic approach. This is completed without losing proper focus on key skills, especially in literacy and numeracy.
- You have ensured that the school's work to develop a holistic approach to pupils' experience in school is built upon in the sixth form. Careful assessments of students' needs and well-thought-through curriculum plans enable you and sixth form staff to deploy resources very effectively. These focus closely on the needs of individual students. They enable staff to adapt students' learning to pursue the overall goal of preparing students very well for their next steps of education and training, highly effectively, at an individual level.
- The school's work to offer valuable work-related learning experiences is a particular strength. Students are full of pride in their various 'jobs' and duties around the school. The scope of work-related learning beyond the school is developing further with local businesses through supported internships. This strong focus on getting students ready for their next steps is reflected in the well-considered rationalisation of the types and range of accredited courses they follow. Offered at different levels, courses focus on those functional work and life skills that they most need. These are complemented by competence-focused courses and opportunities to develop their personal skills, for example through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.
- You take particular care to ensure that parents have many opportunities to learn about the school and their children's development. You see the school's relationship with parents as a key partnership to help pupils thrive. The school website is a strong source of helpful information which is supplemented by opportunities to gather parents' views and keep them up to date, for example through the use of social media messages.
- Governors work closely with you to provide the support and challenge needed to keep the school improving and build further capacity for improvement. Key decisions to restructure the leadership team of the school are generating a sense of dynamism which is quickly accelerating improvement.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- by continuing the development of the curriculum, pupils' development and achievement opportunities become even more personalised by focusing directly on the learning targets in their EHC plans
- classroom staff sharpen further their skills to adapt lessons to challenge pupils to deepen their thinking and understanding when they are ready to do so.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for North Yorkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Campbell  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

Inspectors met with you, other senior leaders, staff and representatives of the governing body. Inspectors talked with a representative of the local authority and a number of parents at the beginning and end of the school day. We also talked with pupils during lessons, during breaktime and at lunchtime. You accompanied inspectors as they observed teaching and learning in lessons. We also gathered evidence of pupils' learning and development by looking at records of their learning and examples of their work, as well as considering the various displays around the school. We considered a wide range of documents about how the school keeps pupils safe, the school's self-evaluation, plans for the future and records of their achievement. We considered the views of pupils, staff and parents. We took account of the responses given by parents in Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. We considered the school's information about how well pupils attend.