

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
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20 November 2018

Mr Richard Westley  
Head of School  
Brooke Hill Academy  
Brooke Road  
Oakham  
Rutland  
LE15 6HQ

Dear Mr Westley

### **Short inspection of Brooke Hill Academy**

Following my visit to the school on 7 November 2018, 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 February 2015.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You, together with governors and the academy trust, are committed to improvement. Together with the executive headteacher and senior leaders, you provide staff with ongoing support and guidance to help them to do their jobs well. You enable staff to share expertise and experience with others within the school and across other schools in the academy trust.

You provide an interesting curriculum with plenty of opportunities for pupils to develop creative and technical skills. The pupils I spoke with during the inspection told me that they enjoy school. They were very keen to show how they use technology to share their learning with each other and with their parents. Pupils very willingly take on responsibilities such as being house captains, members of the 'Games Squad' and members of the school council, to help each other and the school.

Parents are positive about the school's work. They value the range of experiences provided, typified by this parental comment, 'The school focuses on and delivers a broad curriculum and teaches our children to be well-rounded, independent, respectful and culturally-aware children.'

Throughout the school, staff use topics well to stimulate pupils' interest and to promote their writing. For example, when we visited lessons, pupils in a Year 5/6 class told me some interesting facts about the Vikings which staff used skilfully to develop vocabulary and exciting writing. Pupils are expected to use what they know

about grammar, punctuation and spelling whenever they write. In most cases, staff develop pupils' writing skills systematically and challenge pupils to improve. However, this is stronger in key stage 2 than it is in key stage 1.

Your evaluation of how well pupils do by the end of each key stage leads you to determine the school's main priorities. For example, you have reorganised and unified the teaching of phonics to ensure a consistent approach. Your modification of the mathematics curriculum means there is a whole-school emphasis on promoting pupils' mastery of mathematics through practical activities. You and other school leaders check pupils' learning in all subjects in order to provide an effective curriculum.

You and your staff have maintained and improved good outcomes by the end of early years, with an increase in the proportion of boys reaching a good level of development. Your current focus is to make sure that children's skills are built upon well during key stage 1. Although staff share information about children's progress, some tasks are not yet well enough pitched to enable them to move quickly on from what they already know and can do.

At the time of the previous inspection, leaders were asked to provide more opportunities to improve pupils' understanding of cultural diversity beyond the school. You have addressed this well. You have revised the teaching of religious education in order to deepen pupils' knowledge of a range of faiths. Your links with a partner primary school within the academy trust enable pupils to work alongside others from backgrounds and faiths that are different to their own. When I asked pupils about important values, such as respect and tolerance, they showed good understanding, illustrated by this comment, 'Our appearances and personalities may be different but, basically, we are all the same.'

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders, governors and academy trustees ensure that the school's systems and safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. The designated leaders for safeguarding maintain good lines of communication with each other. They work well with external agencies to resolve any child protection issues that may arise.

Staff are well informed and know what to do if they have any concerns over pupils' welfare. They receive regular training and updates. The school carries out the necessary checks on adults who work with pupils.

Pupils say that they feel safe. They know about the different forms that bullying may take but say that it is not a problem in their school. Pupils say that they know who to speak to if they have any worries. Leaders make sure that safety issues, including e-safety, are addressed regularly by the curriculum.

Visitors from outside agencies, such as the NSPCC, and local services including the police force, provide extra guidance for pupils. This, together with visits to outside locations such as the Warning Zone, raises pupils' awareness of any hazards they

might encounter outside school.

### **Inspection findings**

- While the percentage of children reaching a good level of development by the end of early years is on an upward trend, there is some variation in how well children's learning is built upon when they move to key stage 1.
- Over time, outcomes in writing by the end of key stage 1 have been weaker than in reading and mathematics. The school's most recent information and work in books show improvement, with more pupils working at greater depth than previously. However, there is room for greater challenge and a more systematic approach to help pupils to achieve the higher levels.
- The school's information shows that improvements made to the teaching of phonics are resulting in more pupils than previously reaching the expected standard in Year 1.
- In 2018, the school's information shows a marked improvement in the percentage of Year 2 pupils achieving greater depth in mathematics. This was helped by leaders' efforts to ensure that pupils put their learning into practice.
- Differences in performance between groups of pupils are reducing. Leaders regularly check the progress made by various groups, including boys, girls and those from disadvantaged backgrounds. They use the information to provide extra support for those in danger of falling behind, with a positive effect on pupils' academic achievement.
- Leaders' actions to improve the curriculum and nurture good community links beyond the school provide a range of experiences to promote pupils' understanding of culturally diverse modern Britain.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- children's learning in the early years is built upon strongly in key stage 1
- staff provide tasks that enable a greater proportion of key stage 1 pupils to reach the higher levels in writing.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Rutland Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Vivienne McTiffen  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you, the executive headteacher and staff. We looked at the school's progress information and work in pupils' books. We visited some classes together to observe the teaching of phonics, writing and mathematics. I met the chair of the local governing body and three other governors. I spoke to pupils during lessons about their work. I also met with a group of pupils and they showed me examples of their writing in topics, science and religious education. I listened to pupils read and I observed activities at lunchtime. I took into account the 58 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and written comments submitted by parents. I analysed the 18 responses to the questionnaire completed by staff. I scrutinised the single central record of recruitment checks, looked at documentation relating to safeguarding and discussed the school's safeguarding procedures with you and staff. I also looked at the school's self-evaluation and the school development plan.