

Inspection of a good school: Brookfield Community School

Brook Lane, Sarisbury Green, Southampton, Hampshire SO31 7DU

Inspection dates: 1–2 October 2019

Outcome

Brookfield Community School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school and are very proud of it. They get on well with their teachers and with each other. Pupils appreciate how teachers and support staff encourage them to stand on their own feet as young adults. A group of Year 7 pupils, for example, showed how quickly they had settled in to secondary school as they gave confident speeches to a large audience.

Pupils say they are expected to work hard, including with homework. They are diligent in lessons and we saw a high standard of work across a variety of subjects. Many pupils take advantage of the clubs and activities provided outside the school day. Parents and carers told us they were particularly pleased with the additional sport and music opportunities.

Pupils feel safe and well looked after at school. Bullying is rare and, if it happens, the staff typically deal with it quickly and well. Pupils behave very well and become independent. At breaktimes, they are kind to each other, playing team games together or enjoying a conversation. They head off to lessons straightaway when break ends, without needing to be told.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have planned an ambitious curriculum. They use staff training well to share the good practice in the school and check that all teachers follow it. Subject departments think carefully about the order of the topics they teach so that pupils learn facts and skills early on, which helps them to understand more complicated ideas later. Teachers know their subjects very well. They use the school's assessment systems to check pupils' understanding and reinforce their knowledge before moving on. This works especially well in mathematics, where pupils told us they find the work easy. In fact, the standard of pupils' work in mathematics is high. This is because learning is so carefully planned, sequenced and well taught. Staff have checked how primary schools teach writing and plan their Year 7 curriculum to build on these methods. This helps pupils settle quickly and learn well right from the start.

The curriculum contains a broad range of appropriate subjects. Leaders have worked with staff to raise expectations for disadvantaged pupils. As a result, these pupils did much better in their public examinations last year. Leaders continue to focus on ensuring that all pupils achieve well. They recognise that, currently, not enough pupils study a language to meet the government's ambition. Their work to improve the curriculum and raise the profile of languages is working. More pupils are now taking a language at GCSE.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They establish clear routines and boundaries, which, hand in hand with well-planned teaching, ensures that pupils behave well in class. Very occasionally, pupils' learning is not as strong. This is where teaching does not follow on from earlier topics or it is repeated. In these classes, some pupils lose concentration and behave less well.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. They get specialist help to develop their basic skills so that they can play a full part in lessons. The school encourages reading for all and trained teachers give help in phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) to those who need it.

Provision for pupils' personal development is strong. Programmes like the 'leadership ladder' help pupils become more responsible citizens. Pastoral support officers provide excellent support to pupils when they need it. Leaders are monitoring who attends clubs to make sure that all pupils, especially pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and those with SEND, gain from them.

Careers advisers give expert guidance to pupils. Almost all pupils stay on in education or employment after they leave the school. Leaders know more needs to be done to check that pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are encouraged to pick suitably ambitious subjects.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Governors and leaders set the tone that 'it could happen here'. There is a large well-trained safeguarding team. Leaders regularly update staff on any changes in requirements or local safeguarding issues.

Staff at all levels know what to do if they have concerns about pupils. The school involves outside agencies when it needs to and keeps careful records.

Parents say that their children feel safe at school. Pupils know who to go to if they need help and feel confident that their concerns will be dealt with.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The recent focus on disadvantaged pupils' learning led to much better outcomes in public examinations in the last school year. Leaders know that there is more to do to make sure that all pupils achieve well and participate fully in school life. In particular, they need to make sure that expectations for disadvantaged pupils are consistently high, they are accessing extra-curricular opportunities and they are making the best decisions about their future.
- Leaders have made considerable inroads into developing the curriculum. However, there is still more to do. Leaders need to ensure that every subject delivers its curriculum as consistently as the strongest.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2010.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	116419
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10111239
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive (non-selective)
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,771
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Ann New
Headteacher	Stuart Parkes
Website	www.brookfield.hants.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	28 January 2016

Information about this school

- The current headteacher was appointed as acting headteacher in January 2019 and took up the permanent position in September 2019.
- A very small number of pupils attend The Key Education Centre, which provides behavioural and emotional support.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is much lower than found nationally.

Information about this inspection

- We looked in detail at five subject areas. These were English, mathematics, French, history and technology. We spoke to curriculum leaders, teachers and pupils from these subject areas. We visited lessons in each subject and looked at pupils' work.
- We also visited an assembly, tutor times and some extra-curricular activities.
- We met with governors, senior leaders, support staff, recently qualified teachers and pupils from both key stages.
- We looked at a wide range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and action plan, the local authority's advisory report, minutes of governors' meetings,

nationally published performance information, the school website and school policies.

- We also considered 184 responses to Ofsted’s Parent View questionnaire, all of which had additional written comments, as well as 330 responses to the pupil questionnaire and 121 responses to the staff survey.
- We checked the school’s arrangements for safeguarding, including talking to staff and pupils and looking at the school’s single central record of recruitment checks, child protection records, case studies and relevant policies.

Inspection team

Keith Pailthorpe, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Colin Lankester	Ofsted Inspector
Paul James	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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