

Inspection of a good school: Brookside Primary School

Bucknell Road, Bicester, Oxfordshire OX26 2DB

Inspection dates:

15–16 October 2019

Outcome

Brookside Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Staff expect all pupils to work hard and do their best. Pupils know this. They take care with their work, think about what they have already learned that might help them, and persevere with challenging tasks.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. A wide range of interesting activities help them to learn successfully and become well-rounded young people. Their learning in the classroom is strengthened by well-chosen first-hand experiences. For example, pupils practise their French when they visit a café in France. They learn about life as a Victorian maid when they go to a museum. In breakfast club, pupils have opportunities to develop their interests and skills, such as painting with watercolours. Pupils in the choir develop self-confidence when performing in the community.

Most of the time, pupils behave well. They move around the school calmly and sensibly. Pupils hold doors open for visitors. Most pupils are attentive and respectful in lessons. When they find the work difficult, however, some pupils become distracted. Bullying is rare. Staff deal with any incidents of unkindness quickly and effectively. There is always an adult whom pupils can speak to if they are upset. Pupils feel safe.

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

Leaders and governors are committed to ensuring that all pupils succeed. They are always seeking to make the school better and help pupils achieve more. Since the last inspection, leaders have refined curriculum plans so that it is clear in each subject how teachers should build pupils' knowledge and skills over time. They have made it easier for governors to check how well pupils are doing.

Pupils learn a wide range of subjects, carefully linked together in exciting topics. Each topic starts and finishes with a memorable experience. For example, at the start of one topic, pupils talked to an actor playing someone who had witnessed the Great Fire of London. At the end of the topic, they created a museum for parents and carers. This gave

pupils a chance to showcase their learning. Staff used the school's recent 150th anniversary celebrations to bring learning to life. Reception children learned about television programmes children would have watched in the 1960s. Older pupils explored old school log books to learn about schools in Victorian times.

Pupils learn new skills and knowledge in a logical sequence in all areas of the curriculum. Teachers plan lessons that build on what pupils have done previously and help them to remember what they are learning. Work is made more challenging when pupils find it too easy. Those who need extra help, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are supported effectively to help them keep up. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, learn to read, write and use their mathematical understanding well. Sometimes, in other subjects, teachers do not check pupils' understanding as they go along. This means that pupils are not given the help needed when the work is tricky. On these occasions, pupils become distracted, and do not learn as quickly as they could.

Pupils enjoy reading. They like listening to stories read aloud, take part in book competitions and visit the library. Leaders have made sure that all staff are well trained to teach reading well. In early years, staff focus on developing children's listening skills from when they start in Nursery. They move on to teaching phonics as soon as children are ready. Pupils have lots of practice to help them develop their reading skills. They use their reading skills in lots of different subjects as they move up the school. Staff prioritise this, which helps to pupils become fluent, independent readers.

Staff are keen for all pupils to become responsible future citizens. The wider curriculum is of high quality. All pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, benefit fully from the wider opportunities offered in and out of school time. Pupils learn to care for others when, for example, raising funds for a local hospital charity. They find out about democracy when talking to their MP. They learn about other cultures in assembly and through experiences such as watching a demonstration of a Passover meal. As one parent commented, 'They care about the whole child.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

This is a caring school. Staff and governors take part in regular training about keeping pupils safe. Leaders keep detailed records and act promptly when staff raise concerns. All adults have rigorous safety checks before working with pupils. Parents are confident that their children are cared for well.

Staff teach pupils about how to stay safe outside school and when online. Pupils speak articulately about not sharing personal information on computers. Staff work closely with external organisations to make sure pupils and their families get support when needed.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In most subjects, pupils are given timely support if they are stuck. However, in some cases, pupils' misconceptions are not identified quickly enough. Leaders should ensure that across the foundation subjects, staff check pupils' understanding effectively, and identify and correct misunderstandings. This will help pupils build on previous learning successfully and ensure that pupils do not lose interest in their work.

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 November 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	123007
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10111320
Type of school	All-through primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	314
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mr Richard Brown
Headteacher	Mr Nicholas Cornell
Website	www.brookside.oxon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3 March 2016

Information about this school

- The school has a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- The nursery admits three- and four-year olds.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector looked in detail at reading, mathematics and history. This involved talking to subject leaders, visiting lessons, looking at pupils' work, hearing pupils read, and talking to pupils and teachers.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), the early years coordinator and the subject leaders for English, early reading, mathematics and history.
- The inspector met with the vice-chair of the governing body and three other governors.
- The inspector scrutinised the single central record and other documents related to safeguarding, and talked to parents, staff and pupils. The responses to the online questionnaires were also considered.
- Pupils' behaviour was evaluated in lessons, in the playground, in the dining room and while moving around the school.

- A wide range of documentation was scrutinised, including the school's own evaluation and development plan, the headteacher's reports and external reports.

Inspection team

Rosemary Addison, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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