

# Inspection of The Brookfield School

Grandstand Road, Hereford HR4 9NG

---

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 October 2021

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

---

The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Inadequate

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Everyone makes sure that Brookfield is a happy and safe school. High aspirations, positive relationships and commitment to individual pupils are clear to see. Leaders are focusing on improving the right things at the right time. They know that there is still work to do to improve the school further, such as ensuring that the new curriculum is consistently well delivered.

Attendance is getting better but is not yet good enough. Leaders expect pupils to attend school all the time and are having to work hard to get this message across. The COVID-19 pandemic is still affecting some parents' and pupils' confidence in coming to school.

The school is generally a calm environment where pupils can learn. Pupils say that staff deal with bullying swiftly. Some pupils struggle to regulate their behaviour during lunchtime or when moving between lessons. Staff have to keep a close eye on pupils at these times.

The school has developed strong relationships with outside agencies. Pupils get appropriate help for their social, emotional and mental health needs. A lot of effort goes in to making sure that pupils are ready to leave school well prepared for the future.

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

There is a real sense of shared leadership at the school, from governance through to class staff. Everyone has been working together to develop a well-sequenced curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils. The curriculum takes account of pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities. It enables pupils to work towards the goal of achieving suitable qualifications. Pupils are well prepared for the next phase of their life beyond school. Parents and carers speak positively about the difference the school has made to their children.

Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge. They are beginning to put the curriculum into practice, but it is at an early stage of implementation. Teachers know that pupils have gaps in their knowledge, either because of poorer teaching in the past, or because of a disrupted education. These gaps are having to be addressed, and schemes of work need further adaptations. When the curriculum is well delivered, pupils revisit prior learning to embed their knowledge. In geography, for example, pupils showed an increasing confidence in their knowledge of world continents. They recalled this information quickly. Teachers make regular checks on pupils' learning. Leaders are still developing ways in which they plan to assess pupils' learning in most subjects.

Pupils behave well when teachers provide carefully planned activities that build on pupils' prior knowledge. Staff model positive approaches to learning, usually giving

appropriate help. Overall, behaviour is improving, but physical interventions have recently increased.

Staff are helping pupils to become confident and fluent readers who enjoy reading. Pupils learn to decode words in books that match their phonics ability. Teachers promote reading in every classroom. Older pupils who struggle with their reading get extra help.

Leaders have set out their expectations for a positive and tolerant school culture. Pupils to whom the inspectors spoke agreed that their school was a welcoming place, regardless of pupils' differences or needs. A pupil explained, 'We're all humans.' Pupils feel that consequences for poor behaviour are appropriate and fair. The curriculum helps pupils to learn about healthy relationships. This includes issues of consent and harassment. Staff work with external agencies to reinforce the risks associated with knife crime and gangs. Pupils talked confidently about strategies to keep safe if they found themselves in a vulnerable position.

Pupils benefit from guidance and activities that help improve their behaviour and develop their personal interests. Pupils enjoy taking part in the school council. They contribute to decisions to improve the school.

Governors and trustees have a renewed focus on improving the school in the right areas. Some governors are new to the role and have not yet had adequate training. Subject leaders understand their roles well, but their work is at an earlier stage of development.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Governors and staff receive regular safeguarding training. They are aware of the risks that pupils may be exposed to in the local community. Staff understand pupils' additional vulnerabilities. Leaders liaise closely with external agencies when pupils are identified as being at risk of potential harm. They make sure that pupils get timely support.

The school's curriculum ensures that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. Leaders make links with support organisations such as Women's Aid. This enhances the teaching of personal safety, relationships and consent. Pupils talked confidently about strategies to use if they found themselves in vulnerable positions.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders and staff are at an early stage of implementing the well-planned and sequenced curriculum, and of developing appropriate systems for assessment. They should ensure that the curriculum is fully implemented in all subjects,

addressing any gaps in learning, to enable pupils to develop their knowledge and skills over time. Assessment approaches across the curriculum should be clearly set out so that staff are able to identify and address gaps in pupils' knowledge.

- Some newly appointed governors do not have enough knowledge and understanding about the curriculum to be able to challenge leaders effectively. The trust should ensure that governors are suitably trained to enable them to challenge and hold leaders to account for their actions.
- Subject leaders are relatively new to their role. They are not yet ensuring that the curriculum is implemented well. Senior leaders should ensure that subject leaders continue to be supported to further develop their role so that they can contribute to whole-school improvement, including monitoring the implementation of the curriculum.
- Attendance is improving but is still low. Leaders should continue their work with pupils and parents to further improve attendance for all pupils.
- Some pupils struggle to regulate their behaviour at certain times. There has been a recent increase in the use of physical interventions. Leaders should make sure that pupils continue to get appropriate support to self-regulate their behaviour so that physical interventions and behaviour incidents reduce.

## 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 the school and 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	141487
<b>Local authority</b>	Herefordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10201462
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Academy special sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	96
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Tim Manson
<b>Principal</b>	Michelle Parkes
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.brookfield.hereford.sch.uk">www.brookfield.hereford.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	16 and 17 June 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The Brookfield School caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- A small number of pupils are taught at the school's off-site provision, Arrow Centre.
- The school meets the requirements for the delivery of careers education, information advice and guidance. This means that pupils in Years 8 to 11 receive information about the full range of education and training options open to them. This includes opportunities for education and training providers to speak to pupils about technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school uses three unregistered alternative providers.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher and middle leaders to discuss actions taken to improve the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, geography, and design and technology. They met with subject leaders and discussed curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, listened to pupils read, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning, and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at planning and samples of work in history, art, and personal, health, social and relationships education.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of trustees and another trustee via a video call. She met with a local authority officer via video call and spoke to the school's improvement partner on the telephone. External reports and governor minutes were scrutinised.
- Inspectors observed pupils at informal times of the day, including breaktime and lunchtime. An inspector visited the after-school club.
- Representatives of the school council gave the lead inspector a tour of the school and talked about the work of the school.
- An inspector met with the school's careers adviser to discuss provision for careers education advice and guidance.
- An inspector visited the Arrow Centre, accompanied by the headteacher.
- Inspectors considered the work of the school with regard to safeguarding, including scrutiny of the single central record of pre-employment checks, a sample of child protection case files, and safeguarding checks on the use of alternative provision. The lead inspector met with the headteacher in her capacity as designated safeguarding lead.
- Inspectors looked at records relating to behaviour, attendance and physical interventions.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the staff's survey and the parents' survey, Ofsted Parent View. The views expressed in the free-text responses were considered.

## Inspection team

Deb Jenkins, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Russell Hinton

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2021