

Inspection of a good school: Brook Primary School

George Street, Wordsley, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY8 5YN

Inspection dates:

15 and 16 November 2022

Outcome

Brook Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Brook Primary School is a caring and safe place for pupils to make friends and be themselves. Pupils are happy here. They not only understand the importance of the school's values, but they also demonstrate them every day. This helps pupils to develop positive attitudes and good character.

Staff show care and concern towards pupils and treat them with respect. Pupils talk about how their teachers help them to learn by making lessons fun. Pupils say if bullying happens, it is dealt with effectively. School records confirm this. If pupils have a concern, they know that they must tell a trusted adult. They are confident that staff will deal with it appropriately.

Leaders have high expectations for every child. They are ambitious for pupils to succeed in their learning, as well as in their personal development. A wide range of experiences complement the school curriculum. Pupils have many extra-curricular opportunities. These include learning to play a musical instrument, taking part in an overnight residential and links with Dudley performing arts. Leaders pride themselves on the community events that they organise throughout the year. Pupils help plan these events, which also include partnerships with local businesses.

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

Leaders have a clear vision for what learning looks like at Brook Primary School. They know the school well. Leaders take effective action to ensure their high expectations for learning are realised. Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel well supported by leaders and each other. Staff appreciate being involved in developing the curriculum and have considered the knowledge, skills and experiences that pupils need. However, this is further along in some subjects than others. Leaders recognise that there is more work to do to ensure that the knowledge pupils need to learn is carefully ordered in all subjects across the curriculum.

Leaders ensure that the teaching of reading is a high priority. Phonics starts in nursery with stories, rhymes and the teaching of letter sounds. The teaching of phonics is well organised and effective. Leaders put help in place to support pupils who need to catch up. Books that help pupils to read are closely matched to pupils' reading knowledge. As a result, most pupils are learning to read well.

Leaders place an emphasis on developing language and vocabulary from the early years. Children's learning in Reception securely paves the way for what they learn in Year 1. Pupils build on this learning as they move through the school. For example, in mathematics, Reception children learn about whole numbers and how to count accurately. This leads to pupils in Year 1 practising 'quick maths' to make a number sentence in lots of different ways.

Teachers explain new ideas and content clearly. They demonstrate the learning activities that they want pupils to complete so pupils know what is expected of them. Teachers make sure that pupils use the correct language and vocabulary in their explanations. They give pupils time to talk to a partner about their ideas before they start their work.

Some teachers have high expectations about the quality of work that pupils produce. However, this is not consistent. Others do not have the same high expectations. Errors in spellings, punctuation and grammar are not always addressed, which sometimes leads to pupils making the same mistakes in their work repeatedly.

Staff know pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) very well. They identify pupils' needs and use appropriate strategies to support pupils' learning. Teaching assistants support pupils well in lessons and in all aspects of school life. Leaders work well with parents and carers, and external agencies to make sure that pupils get extra help when they need it. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve well.

Pupils talk with confidence about their learning in personal, social, health and economic education. They know what makes a healthy or unhealthy relationship. They talk about the importance of trust, honesty and kindness. Pupils say that everyone should be treated the same and that all relationships are equal. One pupil told me, 'It's okay to be different. There are different types of families, and that's okay.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Leaders and staff understand and fulfil their responsibilities to keep pupils safe. Leaders check that staff are safe to work with children. Safeguarding concerns are reported and acted on swiftly.

Leaders work closely with parents and external agencies to ensure that families get the support they need. Attendance procedures ensure that leaders know when vulnerable pupils are not in school. Leaders take a great deal of care to ensure that pupils are in school and learning. The curriculum teaches pupils how to keep themselves safe and about the importance of speaking to a trusted adult when they have a problem.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum in some subjects is less well developed and sequenced compared with others. Where this is the case, pupils' learning does not always build sufficiently well on their prior knowledge. Leaders should continue to develop and embed newly introduced curriculum plans in order that pupils can build up their knowledge and skills equally as well in all subjects.
- Teachers' expectations for pupils' written work across the curriculum are variable and not always high enough. Teachers do not consistently address errors in pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar. Therefore, pupils do not learn from their mistakes. Leaders need to ensure that teachers help pupils to learn from their mistakes so that they improve the quality of their written work.

Background

When we have judged a school good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in April 2013.

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.

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	103778
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10240840
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	446
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Peter Simpson
Headteacher	Marie Fellows
Website	www.brook.dudley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school provides a daily breakfast club and an after-school club.
- The school uses alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, senior leaders, members of staff, external school support and the school improvement adviser from Dudley local authority. The inspector held a meeting with four members of the governing body.
- Deep dives were carried out in English (including reading), mathematics and design and technology. These included discussions with subject leaders, visits to lessons and scrutiny of work. The inspector also spoke to pupils to discuss their learning in these subjects and watched pupils read to a staff member. The inspector also looked at the curriculum outlines and pupils' work in other subjects.

- A range of documents were scrutinised, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement and curriculum documents, and the school website. Minutes of governors' meetings and reports from external advisers were also considered. The inspector also looked at pupils' attendance, behaviour and safeguarding records.
- The inspector reviewed responses to Ofsted's online parent surveys.

Inspection team

Mel Davies, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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