

Inspection of Brookland School

13 Newhey Road, Milnrow, Rochdale OL16 3NP

Inspection dates: 19 to 21 September 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

Brookland School provides a calm and nurturing environment for pupils to learn in. Many pupils arrive following poor experiences in education. The school sets high expectations to help pupils settle and be ready to reconnect with education. For many pupils, this is their first successful school experience in a long time. Pupils are happy here.

The school has high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They achieve a wide range of accredited awards. This success motivates pupils who, typically, go on to gain passes in the subjects that they study at GCSE.

Promoting pupils' social needs and emotional well-being are a priority for the school. Pupils are supported well by adults. This makes pupils feel safe and valued. They learn to manage their behaviour as a result of the clear routines and the positive relationships that they have built with adults. Pupils said that the school understands them and gives them time when they need it.

The school offers a broad range of extra-curricular and wider experiences. Pupils benefit from the regular opportunities to take part in sporting activities. For example, activities such as skiing, water sports and rock-climbing develop pupils' self-confidence and team spirit.

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

All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Many pupils have been excluded from schools previously or have been out of education for significant periods of time. The school has designed a curriculum that blends therapeutic and academic provision. The school's therapeutic approach helps pupils to better understand themselves so they can develop their communication skills and learn self-regulation. In turn, this helps pupils to engage in academic learning. This enables pupils to develop the knowledge that they need both now and in the future.

Across most subjects, the school has mapped out the vocabulary and knowledge that staff expect pupils to learn. However, in a very small number of subjects, the school is still finalising the specific knowledge that they want pupils to learn. As a result, some pupils do not know and remember these curriculums as well as they should.

Teachers' careful consideration of each pupil's education, health and care (EHC) plan allows them to understand the precise support that individual pupils need to learn well. Mostly, teachers select appropriate activities to deliver the curriculum as the school intends. However, in some subjects, teachers' checks do not cover the precise content that pupils have learned. This prevents teachers from identifying accurately, and building on, what pupils should know and remember.

Reading is prioritised. The school promotes a love of books and engagement with reading to pupils in many different ways. Pupils who need additional support to secure their phonic knowledge are identified swiftly. All pupils benefit from daily spelling and guided reading sessions. This helps them to develop their fluency, confidence and enjoyment in reading. The school ensures that any gaps in pupils' reading knowledge are closed swiftly.

All pupils who attend this school have an EHC plan. The school has effective strategies in place to identify any additional SEND that pupils may have. Teachers are provided with up-to-date information on the additional learning needs of individual pupils. The school makes sure that staff receive frequent training in how to support this group of pupils. Staff use this information and training effectively so that these pupils are well supported to access the curriculum.

The school are skilful at supporting each pupil's behaviour needs. Teachers manage any potentially challenging situations effectively. Most pupils respond quickly to teachers' instructions so that lessons are generally calm and focused. Pupils respond positively to the rewards that they receive for trying their best. Lunchtime in the school's canteen is a sociable event as staff and pupils eat and play pool together.

Pupils' personal development is a high priority in the school. Pupils learn about the differing aspects and complexities of life in modern Britain in a way that is relevant to their own lives. They learn about equalities, diversity and the importance of having respect for others on a day-to-day basis. Much of this learning is delivered through the school's personal, social and health education curriculum. This curriculum incorporates the school's well-thought-out relationships and sex education programme. Additionally, there are opportunities for pupils to get involved in the local community. For example, pupils volunteer to litter pick and host charity coffee mornings.

The school considers carefully what pupils need to live successful adult lives. For example, pupils learn about personal finance, including how to open a bank account and how to rent a house. Relevant careers guidance helps pupils to plan for their next steps in education, employment or training. Pupils are well prepared for their future lives.

The proprietor body has ensured that all the independent school standards ('the standards') are met. The school also complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

The proprietor body, together with school leaders, monitors the work of the school closely. It has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. It knows what the school needs to do to continue to improve the quality of education. The proprietor body ensures that staff have a manageable workload and that their well-being is protected. Leaders support staff well. This helps them to carry out their job effectively. Staff are proud to work at the school.

The school actively seeks to engage with parents, carers and the wider community. This helps to foster a positive and inclusive environment where parents work in partnership with the school to support their child's learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- In a very small number of subjects, leaders are still finalising the specific knowledge that they want pupils to learn. As a result, some pupils do not know these curriculums as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that all curriculums are complete and logically ordered, and that they set out the most important things that pupils need to know and remember. This is to ensure that pupils are even better prepared for the next stage of their education.
- In a few subjects, teachers' checks do not cover the precise content that pupils have been taught. This prevents teachers from identifying accurately, and building on, what pupils know and remember. Leaders should ensure that assessment strategies are further refined so that teachers can build more effectively on pupils' prior learning and, in turn, help pupils to know and remember more.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	131751
DfE registration number	353/6019
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	10286400
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	7 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	21
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Timeout Children's Homes Ltd
Chair	Dominic Macauley
Headteacher	James Docherty
Annual fees (day pupils)	£60,000
Telephone number	01706 658 297
Website	www.brookland-school.com
Email address	james.docherty@timeouthomes.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	4 to 6 June 2019

Information about this school

- The school's previous standard inspection was 4 to 6 June 2019. Subsequently, the school submitted a material change application to the Department for Education to increase the number of pupils on roll and apply to move premises.
- Since the school's material change inspection in October 2022, the school has moved to new premises from Unit 7, Roman Road, Royton, Lancashire OL2 5PJ to 13 Newhey Road, Milnrow, Rochdale OL16 3NP.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- All pupils who attend this school have an EHC plan. Pupils have a range of social, emotional and mental health needs, and some have autism spectrum disorder.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the chair of the proprietor body and the headteacher. They also spoke with other senior leaders, subject leaders and a representative of a local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics and physical education. They talked to leaders and staff about the curriculums in these subjects. They also talked to pupils about what they knew and remembered. They looked at pupils' work and visited lessons. The lead inspector also evaluated the curriculums in other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's policies and documentation related to pupils' welfare and their education. They talked with staff and pupils about pupils' personal development and pupils' behaviour and attitudes. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors checked the school's compliance with the standards. As part of these checks, an inspector toured the school's premises, accompanied by a school leader.

- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, as well as for Ofsted's online pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Kate Bowker, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jackie Stillings

His Majesty's Inspector

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