

Inspection of Brookburn Community School

Brookburn Road, Chorlton-Cum-Hardy, Manchester M21 8EH

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 February 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The head of school is Jen Holden. This school is part of the Link Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The executive headteacher of this school is Jayne Kennedy. The executive headteacher also acts as the chief executive officer of the trust. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Adrian Young.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Brookburn Community School as an academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well in all aspects of their development. The school's vision for inspiring and nurturing pupils runs like a golden thread through all of its work. Pupils, and children in the early years, come into school with smiles on their faces, happy to see their friends and staff.

Pupils typically behave well during lessons. The atmosphere in classrooms is calm and purposeful. Pupils trust that staff will help them with any worries or concerns that they may have. Most pupils strive to be the best that they can be. They are polite, respectful and well mannered.

The school has high expectations for pupils' academic achievement. Most pupils, including those with SEND, achieve well and enjoy their lessons. Many pupils develop a passion for learning. For example, in history, they relish the opportunity to learn about the legacy of their local area.

Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the trips and experiences in which they take part. The activities that are on offer include karate and a comedy club. Pupils said that groups such as the school's rock band provide purpose to their learning and inspire them to play a musical instrument.

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

At the heart of this school is a shared ambition that all pupils, including those with SEND, will achieve well. The school empowers pupils to become resourceful, reflective and resilient learners who are also team players. Pupils blossom throughout their time at Brookburn.

The school has ensured that most curriculum areas are designed well and that there is a suitably broad range of subjects on offer. The school has structured the curriculum so that pupils build knowledge and make connections in learning over time. For example, in geography, pupils were particularly effective in bringing their learning together to talk about different climates and climate change.

Overall, teachers are clear about the knowledge that pupils should learn and when the curriculum content should be taught. However, in a small number of subjects, this content has not been refined. From time to time, this hinders teachers in designing learning for pupils that builds securely on what they already know. This means that some pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

Typically, staff choose activities and resources that support pupils to learn and remember the curriculum. Due to the recent changes in the curriculum, there are times when aspects are not delivered as well as intended. This means that, from time to time, some pupils' experiences in class vary. Over time, most staff use assessment strategies well to check that pupils' earlier learning is secure.

The school has placed reading at the centre of the curriculum. Children learn about letters and the sounds that they represent as soon as they begin the Reception class. Pupils practise reading using books that are carefully matched to the sounds that they already know. Staff routinely check that pupils are keeping up with the phonics programme. If pupils struggle with reading, skilled staff provide effective support to help them to catch up quickly.

The school fosters pupils' reading for enjoyment. Through the book club, Year 6 pupils inspire each other to choose from a wide range of books. Their love of exploring different authors and types of books is contagious. The school buddies up older and younger pupils to share books. This has had a positive impact on building pupils' confidence and their love of reading.

The school has suitable systems in place to support staff to identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND in a timely manner. Staff skilfully adapt their delivery of the curriculum for this group of pupils. Pupils with SEND are supported well by staff to access the same ambitious curriculum as their classmates.

From the beginning of the early years, children learn well-established routines. This helps them to settle into the school day quickly. Pupils in other year groups are mature and work sensibly alongside their friends. They are enthusiastic about learning. Pupils understand the importance of attending school each day.

The school prioritises pupils' personal development. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures. Differences between people are valued and nurtured. Pupils said that this helps them to feel accepted and respected. Pupils who carry out leadership roles, such as eco-councillors and 'Brookie-ing', take their responsibilities seriously. Pupils were keen to explain how they make a difference to school life. For example, they recently helped to refresh the school allotment.

The trustees and local academy council know the school well. They provide an appropriate level of support and challenge. This ensures that there is a constant drive from the school to secure the best provision for pupils.

Staff are proud to work at this school and feel valued. This is because the trust helps staff to manage their workload and provides them with appropriate support to develop their skills and expertise. The recently implemented communication strategies have helped to build more positive relationships with parents and carers.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, curriculum content needs to be refined. This means that, from time to time, staff are not sure what the most important knowledge is and in what order it should be taught. For some pupils this impacts on how well their learning builds over time. The school should hone its curriculum thinking in these subject areas so that pupils make stronger connections between earlier learning and new content.
- There have been several recent changes to the school's curriculum design. At times, some teachers do not deliver the new subject content as well as intended. This means that the experiences of pupils sometimes vary across classes and subjects. The school should ensure that staff are suitably supported to deliver the intended curriculum.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	144131
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10294402
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	448
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Adrian Young
Executive Headteacher	Jayne Kennedy
Website	https://brookburn.manchester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Brookburn Community Primary School converted to become an academy school in September 2017. When its predecessor school, Brookburn Community Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted in 2011, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The school is part of the Link Learning Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for pupils.
- The school runs a before- and after-school club for pupils.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, including early reading, mathematics, history, and languages. They met with subject leaders and teachers. Inspectors visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work and talked with groups of pupils about their learning.
- The lead inspector observed pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors considered the curriculum in other subjects. They met with leaders, spoke with pupils and reviewed pupils' work in these subjects.
- The lead inspector spoke with members of the trust board, including the chair of trustees. She also spoke with representatives of the local authority and of the academy council.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. They also took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- Inspectors met with leaders who are responsible for attendance, behaviour and pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors looked at a range of policies and documentation relating to pupils' welfare and education. They observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around school.
- 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 met with parents at the start of the school day. They took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school. There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.

Inspection team

Helen Friend, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Mark Sherwin	Ofsted Inspector
John Littler	Ofsted Inspector

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