

Inspection of a good school: Brookland Infant and Nursery School

Elm Drive, Cheshunt, Waltham Cross, Hertfordshire EN8 0RX

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 March 2024

Outcome

Brookland Infant and Nursery School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a safe, happy and nurturing school. Pupils are keen learners. Staff know the pupils well. They do their best to meet pupils' individual needs. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. The school treats each pupil as an individual and helps all to shine.

Staff keep pupils safe and set high expectations for behaviour. Children learn routines quickly in the early years. Pupils listen carefully to teachers and engage enthusiastically in lessons. Pupils are well mannered and embrace the school values of respect, honesty, equality, kindness, fun and safety. During breaktimes, pupils engage in lively and imaginative play. They demonstrate sensible behaviour while enjoying their time together.

Pupils enjoy their outdoor learning and the range of after-school clubs. They enjoy the celebration days, such as 'Star of the week' and 'World Book Day'.

Pupils like to share what they know about their own and different religions. They accept differences and say that they would look after and play with any new child that came to the school. Pupils develop into confident and kind individuals, who are ready for their next stage of education.

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

The school has planned a curriculum that is exciting and engaging. Teachers know what knowledge to teach and when. They make sure that learning is sequenced by revisiting knowledge from previous learning. In most subjects, pupils achieve well and can explain what they have learned. In some subjects, the curriculum is new and needs time to become fully established. In these subjects, pupils are not yet consistently using the vocabulary that leaders want them to learn. The school has not yet checked how well pupils are achieving in these subjects. Pupils are not confident at explaining what they know.

Teachers mostly teach the curriculum well. However, on occasions, during independent activities, teachers do not always plan well enough to ensure all pupils can complete the tasks. Sometimes, teachers do not put in place sufficient resources or the necessary extra support for activities. This means that some pupils are not able to achieve as well as they could.

The school sets high expectations for what all pupils can achieve. Leaders ensure that there are effective systems to identify and support pupils with SEND. Teachers ensure that appropriate support is put in place to help pupils with SEND to access the curriculum confidently. As a result, pupils with SEND make strong progress toward their targets.

Leaders have prioritised reading. Skilled staff teach a well-constructed and effective phonics programme. In all lessons, pupils revisit known sounds, learn new ones, and practise blending these sounds together. Opportunities for pupils to apply this phonics knowledge in writing are central to these activities. Pupils learn to read fluently. Staff expertly help pupils who find reading difficult to become confident and keen readers who catch up quickly.

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are immersed in language from the start. They enthusiastically learn and recite poems by heart. They engage in imaginative role-play based on stories they have written. These activities contribute to their strong vocabulary development. Additionally, this positively impacts their early writing skills.

The school's book-themed curriculum fosters a genuine love for reading among pupils. Throughout the school, beautifully displayed books create an inviting atmosphere. Every classroom features cosy reading areas, encouraging exploration and imagination. Pupils are enthusiastic about the stories they love. This includes many traditional tales and stories by well-known authors.

Pupils' learning is rarely disrupted. Pupils maintain interest and engage positively in lessons. Pupils who need it are given specific support to help manage their behaviour. The school works hard to effectively engage with families to address any barriers to attendance.

The school promotes pupils' personal development well. Pupils know that it is important to treat people with kindness and to respect difference. They learn about diverse families and cultures from Nursery onwards. Through routines and activities, children in the Nursery and Reception classes learn early to develop independence and make choices as they learn. Pupils learn responsibilities such as being part of the school council.

Staff enjoy working at the school. They value the training they receive to improve standards. They appreciate the well-being days and being part of a supportive team. Both leaders and staff recognise the staffing challenges they have faced. Staff are optimistic that the recent stability will lead to further improvements in their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subjects are further developed than others. Subject leaders have not carried out all of the necessary checks to find any gaps in learning and whether pupils are remembering the curriculum. For example, ensuring that teachers are reinforcing subject-specific vocabulary and that pupils are remembering it. The school should ensure that subject leaders routinely check the effectiveness of how pupils learn and remember the curriculum.
- Teachers do not always plan lessons well enough to ensure that pupils are able to access activities confidently and independently. This means that some pupils do not complete tasks as well as they should. The school should ensure that teachers always plan activities precisely, ensuring all pupils have the resources and support to achieve as well as they can.

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 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2018.

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	117272
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10294972
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	242
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Warner
Headteacher	Alison Atkinson
Website	www.brooklandinfants.herts.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	16 and 17 May 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school reduced pupil numbers in September 2023 from three form to two form entry.
- There is currently one morning and afternoon nursery session. The school also offers 30-hour funded pupil nursery places.
- There are two Reception classes, three Year 1 classes and two Year 2 classes.
- The school is currently undergoing consultation to become federated with the local junior school.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

- 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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, members of the local governing body and held a telephone meeting with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, science and art. For each deep dive, she discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including behaviour logs, bullying records, records of governor meetings, school development plans and school policies.
- The inspector considered the views of parents through the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View. She also spoke to several parents at the beginning of day two.
- The inspector considered the views of staff and pupils through meetings and informal discussions, and through their responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Cindy Impey, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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