

# Brookfield Community School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112962
<b>Local Authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	311071
<b>Inspection date</b>	22 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kenneth Thomas

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	1362
6th form	311
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Paddy Scully
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Russell Barr
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 October 2004
<b>School address</b>	Chatsworth Road Chesterfield Derbyshire S40 3NS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01246 568115
<b>Fax number</b>	01246 566827

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<b>Age group</b>	11–18
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: target setting and the monitoring of students' progress; the use of assessment information to support learning; the impact of specialist status on students' achievement; and, the overall effectiveness of the sixth form. Evidence was gathered from observations of lessons and students' work, parents' questionnaires, interviews with staff, students and the chair of governors and extensive school documentation, including its self-evaluation. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspectors found no reason to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

Brookfield Community School is much larger than most other secondary schools. The school is heavily oversubscribed. There is a broad balance of boys and girls in each year group. Very few students join or leave the school other than at the usual time at the beginning or end of the school year. Most students are from White British backgrounds and the vast majority have English as their first language. The proportion of students with learning difficulties or disabilities is below the national average. The home economic backgrounds of students are also above the national average and the proportion of students with statements of special educational needs is average. The school has specialist sports college status and is the hub of a School Sports Partnership. It holds Health Promoting School Status, the Financial Management in Schools Standard and the Quality in Libraries Award. It is the lead school in the area network for the Modern Foreign Languages Secondary Strategy.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

The school provides an outstanding quality of education for its students and gives excellent value for money. The school works exceptionally well with other schools, agencies and with the community to enrich students' education and ensure their well-being. Parents strongly agree. One captured the views of many by writing, 'Brookfield is an excellent school, which I am proud to have children attending'.

Students enter the school with attainment that, although covering a very wide range, is above average overall. By the end of Year 9, they achieve standards that are well above average and show a rising trend over the last four years. Standards by the end of Year 11 are significantly above average across all the main indicators and have been maintained at this level since the last inspection. Virtually all students achieve five or more qualifications at GCSE level and the proportion gaining five or more higher grades, including English and mathematics, is high in relation to the national average. All students, including those who find learning more difficult and those with particular gifts and talents, make outstanding progress from their starting points to achieve challenging targets. As a result, the school achieves the targets set as part of its Sports College status.

Teaching and learning are good and in some lessons outstanding. The school has developed a consistent approach to planning and structuring lessons and this approach, together with the effective use of electronic whiteboards, is having a positive impact on the quality of lessons. Students make good progress because they respond positively to the requests of teachers and demonstrate real enjoyment in school. They thrive when lesson activities are challenging and allow them to take responsibility for their own learning. The school has strengthened procedures for assessing students' attainment and this information is used well to track their progress. There are also examples of the effective use of assessment to gauge the extent to which lesson learning objectives are being achieved and the next steps in learning planned. However, there is too much variation in the quality of teachers' marking. In some instances marking does not indicate the standard of the work and in other instances marking does not let students know what they must do to improve.

Students' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding because the school's expectations of them are very clear and consistent. Students learn in a supportive and inclusive environment where they feel safe and valued as individuals. Students are proud of the school and enjoy taking part in the many activities it has to offer. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. Students feel safe and say that bullying is rare. They are confident that any instances would be dealt with effectively. Attendance is excellent. Members of the elected school council take great pride in their responsibilities. They feel that their suggestions and opinions are listened to and acted upon. Students have a proper regard for safety and a good awareness of risks to their personal health and well-being. High levels of participation in physical activity and a clear knowledge of healthy foods enables students to develop a strong sense of a healthy lifestyle. Students respond extremely well to the numerous opportunities to take responsibility and make outstanding contributions to the community. They have an impressive understanding of different cultures. Their preparation for later economic well-being is excellent because they have well-developed skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology, as well as in their personal qualities.

Students' personal development is supported by excellent care, support and guidance. This is evident in the very positive relationships that are seen in all lessons and in the many informal exchanges between staff and students. Staff demonstrate strongly caring attitudes and students receive excellent personal support and guidance at times of transition. They say that are able to talk with teachers about any of their concerns. Students' progress is closely monitored and the very effective support provided for those who experience difficulties in learning ensures that their progress is comparable to that of their peers. As one parent wrote, 'My child has special educational needs and is doing exceptionally well because of the care and support being given'. The school fully meets statutory requirements for the protection of children and monitors health and safety issues closely.

The curriculum offers a wide range of academic subjects and is well suited to the needs of students and the aspirations of parents. From September 2008, the curriculum will also include a number of work-related courses through the school's participation in the 'Chesterfield Learning Community'. Very effective support ensures that students across the attainment range have full and equal access to the curriculum. An excellent range of enrichment opportunities, in which high numbers of students participate, complements the curriculum. In addition to residential visits at home and abroad, students of all abilities take advantage of the many clubs and other activities offered. As befits a specialist sports college, large numbers of students participate in a wide range of sporting activities, with many achieving high standards. These activities, together with the high quality musical and drama productions, make an important contribution to students' personal development.

The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, senior staff and governors, is characterised by a very clear vision for the school based on continuous improvement and high achievement for all. Students are educated in an environment based upon clear values and principles, which influence every aspect of school life, so that students feel valued and respected. The school actively promotes a learning culture that successfully motivates and inspires students and staff. This creates excellent conditions for learning and makes a significant contribution to students' achievement. Governors hold the school to account very effectively and know its strengths and areas where improvement is needed. The school has tackled the key issues raised at the last inspection effectively. Teaching and learning have been strengthened by well targeted training following rigorous monitoring and evaluation. More effective use is made of assessment information to monitor students' progress. The school has excellent capacity for continued improvement.

## **Effectiveness of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 2**

This is a good and rapidly expanding sixth form. Standards are above average and students' academic achievement is good. About 40 per cent of students enter the sixth form from other schools at the start of Year 12. These students settle quickly because they receive very effective support and relationships are excellent. Students' progress is carefully monitored and additional support provided when necessary. This, together with good teaching and learning, and an essentially academic curriculum that is well suited to students' aspirations, contributes well to students' academic success. Leadership and management of the sixth form are outstanding. Virtually all students complete their courses and are able to pursue the higher education courses or career options of their choice. Students' personal development is excellent because they respond so positively to the many opportunities provided for them to show initiative and take responsibility. They serve as positive role models, display maturity in their behaviour and act

very responsibly towards younger members of the school. The sixth form provides good value for money.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure greater consistency in the implementation of the school marking policy so that in all subjects students are provided with clear and regular guidance on the standard of their work and how to improve.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall	16-19
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The attendance of learners	1	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	1

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

23 May 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Brookfield Community School, Chesterfield S40 3NS

I would like to thank you all, on behalf of the inspection team, for your politeness and co-operation during our visit. We greatly appreciated your comments and opinions and were very impressed with your enthusiasm and excellent attitudes to school.

Your school is giving you an outstanding education. This is seen in the consistently high standards that you reach and the outstanding progress that you make through the school. Your excellent behaviour in lessons is a considerable help to your teachers because it enables them to concentrate on helping you to learn. This is one of the reasons why you make such outstanding progress from the time you join the school. There is a really friendly and positive atmosphere in the school and relationships between yourselves and the staff are excellent. The curriculum is enriched by the exceptionally wide range of visits and after school activities that broaden your experiences. You know that staff care about you and work very hard for you. One of the ways in which teachers help you is by spending a lot of time marking your work. We have asked them when they mark, to give you more guidance on the standards of your work and the things that you need to do to make your work better.

Those of you in the sixth form are making good progress and standards are above average. You are excellent role models to the rest of the school and set a superb example in helping others. The range of courses is well suited to your needs and interests and you are given very good support and guidance.

We were very pleased to see you that so many of you are keen to make the most of the opportunities the school is providing for you. We wish you continued success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Dr K C Thomas

Lead inspector