

Brookfield School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131817
Local Authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	315873
Inspection dates	3–4 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Denise Morris

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	58
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bridget Jones
Headteacher	Oremi Evans
Date of previous school inspection	4 July 2005
School address	Grandstand Road Hereford HR4 9NG
Telephone number	01432 265153
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is special school for pupils with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties (ESBD). All pupils have a statement of educational need and are White British. They are mainly boys with very few girls. The school has two separate buildings on the main site, one for primary and one for secondary age pupils. There is a satellite class known as the 'Arrow Group' for pupils who find attending school challenging. There is an intervention class for primary pupils. A high proportion of children are looked after. A few pupils who are dual registered attend part time. The school is working to become a specialist school for ESBD.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school for pupils with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. It has many strengths. Excellent leadership by the headteacher has enabled the school to move forward at a fast pace. There have been many improvements since the last inspection. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school now and in the future, a vision that is fully shared and supported by senior managers. The overall warm and welcoming ethos that they have created has resulted in excellent behaviour and in the pupils' excellent personal development. In this very caring atmosphere pupils thrive because they are highly valued. The advances pupils make in learning to manage their own behaviour are outstanding and contribute significantly to the academic standards, which are rising. Governors are extremely supportive and knowledgeable about the school's strengths and areas for development. Consequently there is excellent capacity for further improvement. Pupils are polite and helpful. They care deeply about their school. This is particularly evident in the way the school is presented. The abundance of work on display shows how proud pupils and staff are of what is being achieved. Pupils say that they enjoy school and they attend regularly. Their awareness of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues is high and their development in these aspects is good. They show good understanding of how to lead healthy lives by regularly participating in sport and by making healthy choices at lunchtimes. They are actively involved in local events and regularly raise funds for charities.

From low starting points, pupils' achievement is outstanding. They do well because of some excellent teaching and the good curriculum activities provided. By the end of each key stage in Years 6, 9, and 11 pupils show that they make at least good, and often outstanding progress and consequently they achieve broadly average standards in mathematics and science. Pupils who attend the off-site provision at the Arrow Group also make excellent improvement given their often very troubled starts. They have many high quality opportunities to explore the world of work, which prepare them well for their futures. The accommodation at the Arrow Group is poor and is not fit for its purpose. Standards are rising in English, mathematics and science. There are not always enough planned opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills in subjects other than English. By the time they leave school in Year 11 all pupils achieve some accreditation in nationally recognised courses. Many go on to study successfully at college.

Pupils are exceptionally well cared for. Systems to keep them safe are rigorous and they are carefully protected from harm. High quality support is provided for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities so that they achieve well. Individual education plans and behaviour plans are developed with pupils and regularly reviewed. Parents are extremely supportive of the school. Targets are challenging and almost all pupils exceeded their targets this year. The excellent new assessment and tracking system is a particular strength in helping staff to keep track of how well each pupil is doing and what they should be aiming to do next.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend opportunities for pupils to learn and use their literacy skills in subjects beyond English.
- Find ways to improve the accommodation for the Arrow Group.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

On entry to the school almost all pupils have significant difficulties with learning so consequently standards are often well below average for their age. Many have been non-attenders in their previous schools. During their time at Brookfield almost all pupils achieve well with many making excellent progress. The achievement of all pupils in their personal development, particularly their behaviour, is outstanding. By the end of Year 6 many have caught up with past weaknesses in learning and achieve average standards in the national tests in mathematics and science. Pupils continue this good progress in Years 7 to 9 so that by the end of Year 9 many also attain average standards in mathematics and science in their national tests. In 2007, standards rose significantly. Five out of six pupils achieved above average standards in mathematics and all pupils who took the tests achieved average standards in science. Achievement in English is good and although standards overall are below average they are rising. All pupils in Year 11, including those who attend the Arrow Group, achieve at least one externally accredited academic or vocational qualification, such as Entry Level or GCSE by the time they leave the school, and most achieve more than this.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development of the pupils is outstanding. This is the result of excellent personal, social and health education teaching and the wrap-around care provided by the school. Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good with outstanding features in the social and moral strands. Pupils are able to express themselves creatively through a range of experiences. The impressive skills the staff use in supporting individuals and persuading groups to give of their best ensure that behaviour in and around the school is outstanding. The rewards system and the support pupils receive from staff are particularly appreciated. Pupils are eager to take on responsibilities, make informed decisions and communicate effectively. They routinely self-assess their own conduct. Attendance is good and has recently improved due to the concerted efforts by the school, for example by targetting and so re-engaging the Arrow Group pupils.

Pupils truly enjoy their school experiences. 'There is always something exciting happening,' commented one. They talk enthusiastically about life at Brookfield and, in conversation with inspectors, could not think of anything they wanted the school to do better. Excellent relationships exist between staff and each individual learner and there is an atmosphere of trust. The pupils feel safe, are safety conscious themselves and show excellent respect for their school environment. The school is an orderly community. Through the school council the pupils have a voice in how the school develops, they take many opportunities to fund-raise and to interact positively with the local community. They adopt healthy lifestyles through the high quality physical education (PE) offered and the excellent provision of healthy options at lunchtime.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching is at least good in all areas of the school and in many lessons is outstanding, leading to pupils making excellent progress. Teachers typically plan lessons well and make good use of information and communication technology (ICT) both to demonstrate learning and to enable pupils to present their work properly. Resources are used particularly well to provide visual clues that help pupils to concentrate, stay on task and learn effectively. Assessment is also used effectively to keep track of each pupil's progress and to determine what needs to be learned next. All members of staff follow the school's rigorous behaviour management strategies and because of this pupils know what is expected of them and their behaviour in lessons is almost always good; outstanding in this context. Relationships are very strong and teaching assistants play a valuable part in securing the success of the pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Action taken by the school has effectively improved provision for ICT since the last inspection. Although teaching and using ICT skills in different subjects are now well established, the school has yet to identify similar opportunities to link numeracy, and particularly literacy, across the curriculum. However, the school has identified doing this in literacy as a focus for the coming year. There is an exciting range of well attended after-school clubs, visits and visitors, all of which significantly enhance the quality of an already good curriculum.

Lessons provide pupils with a wide range of opportunities for them to take personal responsibility for their learning, for example by the way in which they are involved in their session-by-session assessment of progress towards achieving their behaviour targets. There are good links with local colleges and all older pupils have good access to the world of work. Provision for personal, social and health education is outstanding and having a significant impact on pupils' behaviour and their attitudes towards their learning. 'Values' pervade school life and prepare pupils well for becoming lifelong learners. High quality provision for PE has been recognised through the award of Sports Mark Gold.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The staff's high level of commitment to provide personalised support and guidance for each pupil and their family, is the basis of the outstanding care, guidance and support the school provides. Great care is taken to make a comprehensive analysis of each pupil's needs when they start at Brookfield in order to provide individualised support and guidance. Supervision is very good, unobtrusively ensuring that the pupils have a very good awareness of health, safety and how to improve both socially and academically. Together, the staff provide excellent role models, and as a team, provide a very supportive and stimulating environment for the pupils.

Each pupil has an individual education plan through which challenging targets are set and progress monitored. Targets are fully accessible and are used as a focus during lessons to remind pupils about the focus of their learning and to celebrate success. Behaviour targets are reinforced in every lesson when pupils are required to self-assess their performance. Tracking by teachers is secure and any underachievement is quickly identified and appropriate action taken. Processes

for improving behaviour and promoting an anti-bullying culture are excellent. These ensure that pupils feel safe and are fully supported by parents, one of whom wrote, 'The school certainly knows how to deal with the 'special' in special needs.'

Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust. The school works closely with a wide range of external services in order to make provision for the full range of needs. The school's learning mentor is providing outstanding support to both pupils and families.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Outstanding leadership and management result in high quality provision for all pupils. The headteacher has a very good view of what needs to be done to raise standards further. Her clear vision for the school is shared by the deputy and by senior managers. They are all committed to making the school the best possible place they can for all its pupils. This has resulted in highly effective procedures being put in place to raise achievement and standards and improve the quality of provision. Pupils of all abilities are carefully supported so that they can achieve as well as possible. Senior managers have made significant improvements recently. The assessment and tracking system, for example, is a key feature in the way the school has improved its ability to monitor individual pupils' progress. Very clear evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses has ensured that there is good understanding of what needs to be done next. Although the accommodation for the Arrow Group is poor, use of other resources available to the school is good. Governors are supportive. They take their responsibilities seriously and rigorously ensure that pupils are safe and secure. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
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
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	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	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	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

5 July 2007

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Brookfield School, Hereford HR4 9NG

Thank you for your help during our recent visit to your school. We really enjoyed meeting you and looking at your work. Yours is an outstanding school and there are lots of very good things about it that help you to do well.

- Your behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent and you are polite and helpful.
- You make outstanding progress and achievement is excellent.
- Your teachers make lessons exciting and provide lots of good activities and visits for you all.
- Your headteacher and other leaders make sure you are safe and secure. They take very good care of you and lead the school in excellent fashion.

There are just two things that could be improved.

- You need to have more chances to use your reading and writing skills in other subjects. You could try to help with this.
- The building for the Arrow Group needs to be improved.

Thank you again for your help and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Denise Morris Lead inspector