

# Brooke School

Overslade Lane, Rugby, CV22 6DY

**Inspection dates** 23–24 October 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Brooke School is a happy, caring school where everyone cares for each other.
- All groups of pupils achieve well because they are offered an interesting and varied range of subjects, which meets their needs and interests.
- The pupils make excellent progress in developing their social skills. They show enthusiasm for learning and their behaviour is consistently good. They feel safe, know how to stay healthy and safe and attend school regularly.
- Teaching is generally good and sometimes outstanding because teachers know pupils' starting points well.
- School leaders carefully check up on the quality of teaching and make sure that it is constantly improving.
- The sixth form provides a good level of education through both its school-based subjects and college placements.
- The school has an excellent partnership with parents who feel fully involved in their children's education.
- The school farm and 'forest school' provision offer the pupils a unique range of opportunities for both academic and personal development.
- Governors carry out their responsibilities very effectively and have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A few teachers do not always set activities at the right level for pupils, particularly those who are more able.
- In some lessons teaching staff do not always make it clear as to exactly what new skills and knowledge they want pupils to learn.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 19 lessons, 13 of which were observed jointly with either the headteacher or one of three senior leaders.
- There were insufficient results to the online survey of parents' opinions Parent View to take this into account, but the inspectors did take account of the 41 parental responses to a recent school survey. The team also considered the 37 replies to the staff questionnaire.
- Meetings were held with various members of staff, representatives from the governing body and a telephone conversation took place with a representative of the local authority. The inspectors spoke to many pupils, met with a small group and looked at behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors looked at documentation about pupils' progress, teaching and planning. The school's documents on safeguarding were scrutinised together with records of attendance and pupils' behaviour.
- The inspectors listened to pupils reading in lessons and on their own and looked at their work in lessons.

## Inspection team

Ronald Hall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kate Robertson

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Pupils at Brooke School have a statement of special educational needs for moderate or severe learning difficulties.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is above average. This extra government funding supports certain groups of pupils, such as those who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- A number of Year 11 and post-16 pupils attend part-time courses at Warwickshire College and Harris School, Rugby.
- The proportion of pupils who enter and leave the school at times other than the normal starting points is well above average.
- Pupils are taught in mixed-aged classes across the school due to the varying numbers in each year group.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by making sure that all teaching staff make clear what new skills and knowledge pupils are to learn in lessons.
- Raise achievement by making sure that all teachers challenge the more-able pupils in every lesson.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' attainment is low because of their moderate or severe learning difficulties. However, pupils across the whole school, regardless of their backgrounds, make good progress because of consistently good teaching which fosters a desire to learn and to succeed. Parents rightly feel their children are encouraged to do their best.
- Pupils make very strong gains in their personal development mean that all pupils become increasingly independent as they proceed through the school and all move on to further education and training. All pupils gain some form of external qualification from very low starting points and most achieve their target levels.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a positive start to the children's education and begins the very positive development of their personal and social skills. This continues throughout the school and is completed in the sixth form, where pupils' life skills are developed through practical tasks. College placements and work experience further enhance this development and prepare them for life after school well.
- The school's information on the achievement of individual pupils shows that the rate of progress is broadly the same for girls and boys. Progress is faster the longer pupils stay in the school, reflecting the long-term benefit of the well-focused academic and personal support that they receive. However, a few more-able pupils achieve less well than they could because they are not always challenged in every lesson.
- Pupils have poorly developed language and communication skills when they join the school. The school's language and communication team makes sure that all pupils are provided with good opportunities to accelerate their skills across the school. Those pupils who are capable of reading make good progress in line with their age and ability. These pupils also make good progress in writing because of the support they receive and the effective and consistent programme to teach phonics (the sounds that letters make).
- Progress in mathematics is good because the subject is enthusiastically taught by staff and because of a good range of resources, including a range of computer software.
- Pupils are really keen to participate in the farm-based work and 'forest school' provision. This eagerness means that pupils achieve well in these areas. For example, a group of younger pupils were observed studying nature, science and mathematics aspects in the 'forest school' area. Two pupils with autistic spectrum disorders spent a great deal of time together exploring the effects of slopes on rolling potatoes. The pleasure they gained from working together was clearly evident.
- Pupils make good progress in their physical development because of a strong sporting and physical programme, featuring a good range of activities. For example, pupils stated they really enjoy horse riding, football and other sports. Many of the pupils attend swimming lessons and gain national or school awards.
- The pupil-premium funding is used to provide individual support and specialist subject help, electronic notepads for pupils, pastoral support, subsidies for residential visits and transport for other activities. All these measures have a positive effect in making sure that all pupils can participate fully in all the school has to offer. As a result, there is no difference in the

achievement of pupils supported by the additional funds and others in either English or mathematics.

- The effect of spending from the Year 7 catch-up funding, used to smooth the difficult transition from Year 6, has resulted in pupils making rapid progress over the year. The funding is used mainly for improving literacy and numeracy resources for these pupils, providing specific individual and small group support and specialist agency support.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers and other adults have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They use information about pupils' progress to plan activities that match most pupils' needs and adapt their teaching to make sure that pupils make good progress. Pupils were eager to tell inspectors of the positive way in which they are taught.
- Teachers and the other adults involved in supporting learning are given time to work together to plan lessons. However, teaching staff do not always make clear what skills and knowledge pupils are learning in every lesson and so progress is slowed for some pupils.
- All adults are enthusiastic and this helps motivate pupils. They make learning fun and tasks interesting. For example, in an excellent English lesson focused on time connectives pupils were encouraged and challenged throughout, gaining great self-confidence from their success due to the imaginative way in which the lesson was taught.
- Lessons are planned well and very little time is lost. Teachers use short, sharp tasks that keep interest and motivation. In addition, older pupils are encouraged to sustain concentration through more complex tasks. An excellent example of this was the café the pupils created for the general public to attend. They had carried out research to see how a café and restaurant operated, the personnel involved and the roles they played. They created the tablecloths, prepared the food and delegated roles. This was an excellent example of how life skills can be developed in a practical, real-life situation.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Both teachers and the other adults who support learning build excellent relationships with the children. This in turn encourages them to learn and always do their best.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good. Teachers provide a good range of opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their skills in preparation for their future lives. The creation of the café experience is a prime example of this. Pupils not only had the practical experience of running a café but also of visiting a number of cafes and restaurants in order to prepare for its creation.
- All adults constantly assess the progress the pupils make and, where appropriate, regularly discuss with pupils how they can improve their work. In the best lessons they use this information to improve work as lessons are happening.
- All adults support and manage behaviour well, which means they are not spending time dealing with adverse behaviour. However, where lessons are less effective pupils do lose concentration and minor disruption occurs.
- Teachers do not consistently give more-able pupils their higher-level work quickly enough in lessons. As a result, these pupils do not always make the faster rates of progress they could make.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils generally behave well during lessons and around the school despite their high level of social and behavioural needs. Pupils say that adults never shout at them and work with them to help them control their behaviour.
- Pupils make good and for some outstanding progress in their social skills. Adults model the behaviour they expect of pupils at all times and so pupils learn over time how to relate to others. Pupils are welcoming and polite towards each other and adults alike, for example, holding doors open for them. At lunchtime, staff and pupils eat together, creating a calm and relaxed atmosphere.
- School records show that over time behaviour has improved both in general and for individuals.
- All staff know the pupils very well and are skilful in managing behaviour. However, when lessons are not as good minor disruption does occur.
- As pupils proceed through the school, they are given increasing opportunities to become independent and take on responsibilities. They support younger pupils at break and especially lunch times. They have a clear say in the running of the school and the content of their learning.
- The school tackles discrimination effectively. Pupils are very aware of what bullying is, including the different types. They say that it does sometimes happen but that adults deal with it quickly and effectively. They conduct themselves safely about the school and in lessons. School information shows pupils behave equally well in college or work placements.
- There have been only three exclusions over a two-year period and instances of poor behaviour have fallen markedly. Pupils say they feel safe and parents agree with this view.
- Attendance is good for a special school and has improved steadily for some time, mirroring the positive attitudes of pupils to their learning.

**The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher and his newly formed senior leadership team have brought a freshness and new enthusiasm into the school, continuing the good work seen at the previous inspection and successfully tackling the issues that were identified then. The school has strengthened senior and other leadership significantly by appointing very capable senior staff.
- The new leadership team and governors have high expectations of success and a clear vision of the way forward. They have set a strong foundation for the future through the actions they have already taken. They have established effective procedures to improve the quality and reliability of checks on pupils' developing skills. The planning of lessons by teaching staff now uses much more accurate information on the pupils' different starting points and the levels that they have achieved.
- The senior leaders have arranged training for staff when they have identified weaker teaching through their close checks on lessons. They have a good understanding of how to judge the quality of teaching. Other leaders receive effective support, encouragement and training so that they play a full leadership role, for example, in checking the quality of teaching in the different

subjects and year groups.

- Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation is good. Many changes have been made in order to make the subjects taught more interesting and fun. The progress of the children is tracked effectively and used to inform future planning.
- The leader of the sixth form provides good leadership and monitors the quality of teaching effectively. A wide range of opportunities have been developed to make sure pupils are fully prepared for their lives after school.
- The school has very positive relationships with parents and other partners, including local colleges and schools. Pupils' cultural and creative awareness is promoted well through the wide range of opportunities provided for pupils to explore other religions and cultures.
- The school is committed to being as inclusive as possible so that each pupil feels valued. Leaders and managers tackle any discrimination or underachievement effectively. Neighbouring schools send their own pupils for lessons on the farm and 'forest school' area, as they perceive a benefit not only to their own pupils but also for those in Brooke School as they work with their peers from other schools.
- Parents indicate that they feel the school is well led and managed and that they and their families are well involved and supported by the school through workshops and frequent, regular newsletters and the school website.
- The school has careful systems for preparing pupils in advance for moving to the next stage of learning, usually at a local college, and parents take an active part in this.
- The varied and interesting range of subjects is well designed to foster pupils' self-confidence and promote their joy of learning, through creative and practical activities. The activities that are provided promote the learning, health and well-being of the pupils and are relevant to both their current and future needs and aspirations.
- The local authority offers 'light touch' support, reflecting its positive view of the capabilities of the senior staff and governors to keep up the drive to improve further.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Members of the governing body are very effective at supporting and challenging the school. They carry out this responsibility, through regular classroom visits as well as by scrutinising progress information and reports from the headteacher. These activities provide governors with an accurate picture of the pupils' progress and of the quality of teaching. The performance management of the headteacher is carried out rigorously and governors have a secure overview of how teachers' pay links with classroom performance. They know what the school is doing to reward good teachers and tackle any underperformance. The governors understand well what financial and personnel resources are required to take the school forward. This includes scrutinising the impact of the Year 7 catch-up and pupil premium funding. They give full regard to the well-being and safety of pupils, and treat all safeguarding very seriously. Governors have received recent training on performance management, funding systems and lesson observations.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	125801
<b>Local authority</b>	Warwickshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	427063

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2-19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	161
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	35
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Maggi Armitage
<b>Headteacher</b>	Chris Pollitt
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 January 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01788 812324
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