

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



10 February 2016

Mrs M Allan
Headteacher
Brookfield Community School
Brook Lane
Sarisbury Green
Southampton
Hampshire
SO31 7DU

Dear Mrs Allan

Short inspection of Brookfield Community School

Following my visit to your school on 28 January 2016, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in October 2010.

This school continues to be good.

- You and your senior team and governors have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.
- Your determined, strong and very effective leadership is driving improvements in all aspects of the work of the school.
- A very strong culture of learning and mutual respect has been established. Staff and pupils are very proud to be a part of their school after what has been a transformation in its character over recent years.
- You are very well supported in your work by a talented senior team and many very good middle leaders.
- Governors demonstrate very good strategic oversight of the work of the school.
- All areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection reports have been addressed successfully.
- Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the site.
- Much of the teaching is well planned and teachers offer good feedback to pupils about their next steps. Pupils expressed significant and well-placed faith in their teachers.
- Many pupils achieve well. There have been inconsistencies in pupils' achievements across subjects over recent years but these problems are being addressed currently.

- Pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium make similar progress to others nationally, but their achievements do not yet match those of others in the school. Some significant gaps between their achievement and others are beginning to close securely.

Safeguarding is effective.

All necessary checks are undertaken to ensure that those who work with pupils in the school are fit to do so. Procedures around recruitment are equally secure and rigorous. Good and regular training for staff in all aspects of safeguarding is provided, including for those who join mid-year. All relevant policies are in place and are maintained up to date; they give a good steer to safeguarding in the school and support a strong ethos of caring for pupils.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe online in various subjects and in personal development time with their tutor. They are well informed around issues such as 'sexting', and the dangers posed by websites that promote extremism.

The school has a strong culture of safeguarding and supporting pupils' physical and emotional welfare. Pupils wanted inspectors to know that they felt that staff are always ready to help and support them in their learning and well-being.

Inspection findings

The school's effectiveness remains securely good. Your and your team's very good leadership means that many aspects of its work have improved significantly over the last few years. There is a strong culture of accountability among leaders; meetings are purposeful, focused on teaching and learning, and involve mutual challenge as well as support.

The school's evaluation of its work is accurate and reflects your ambition for all aspects of its work to be outstanding. Current strengths and development needs are known and understood very well. This enables development planning to be very focused and effective. Systems to monitor pupils' achievement are efficient and are of high quality. They have enabled senior staff to gather high-quality information about the progress of different groups of pupils, which they then use to steer interventions and offer challenge and support to middle leaders. Senior staff have responded decisively to the need to intervene in the work of departments to respond to some instances of pupils underachieving recently. This is supporting better learning where it is needed.

Governors are very well informed about the work of the school. They offer expert and insightful challenge to you and your senior team. Governors are rightly very proud of their school and they offer very good strategic support for its development.

Leadership of the core subjects is very strong. As a result, teams work together well and share best practice quickly and effectively. High standards are expected and achieved in mathematics and English; science was described by pupils as 'amazing!' Pupils make very good progress in mathematics; GCSE examination results have improved rapidly over recent years and are now very good. In lessons, pupils demonstrate fluency and confidence in expressing their understanding of the work. Many have well-developed skills of mathematical reasoning. For example, in one lesson observed, Year 7 pupils were adding mixed fractions confidently and accurately, and could also explain how different approaches produced the same answers and why. Examination results in English in 2015 are better than some published data indicate because of a large number of changes made to pupils' grades in the light of appeals to results. Learning in English is currently rapid and secure. Pupils demonstrate high standards of writing and articulacy in the expression of their ideas. Year 9 pupils are already demonstrating impressive insights into some challenging material, including poetry and Gothic novels. Feedback from teachers in a wide range of subjects is very clear about what pupils need to improve in order to meet their targets. There is a high level of consistency across the school both in the ways in which this is done, and in its quality.

The quality of communication with parents is now good. The large majority who responded to Ofsted's online Parent View questionnaire feel that they are well informed about their child's progress and say that the school responds well to any concerns they may raise. A very large majority would recommend the school.

Pupils eligible for the pupil premium have made useful gains in their learning over recent years. Their progress was similar to the national average of other pupils by the end of Key Stage 4 in 2015. However, this group has not previously made as good progress as other pupils in the school. As a consequence, some large in-school gaps in attainment in many subjects have existed. These gaps are now beginning to close throughout the school. This is a result of better-targeted strategies in classrooms to support the more rapid progress specifically of disadvantaged pupils. Many are provided with essential materials, for example ingredients in food technology, technical equipment in mathematics and revision guides in English. However, not all departments have clear subject-specific strategies agreed by all of their staff which are consistently employed.

The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs has improved over the last few years as a result of a significant reorganisation of this aspect of the school's work in 2013. These pupils have not achieved as well as others in the past, but these gaps are closing now.

There is still some inconsistency in standards across subjects. Many pupils study a modern foreign language to GCSE but some have not been taught well in the past. This is being tackled by better teaching currently, although significant gaps in knowledge and understanding remain. Standards in geography are very variable due

to some previously weaker teaching, but some pupils are catching up rapidly, particularly the more able.

Pupils are attentive, keen to learn and behave very well in lessons, particularly in group work. They draw on their previously acquired and well-developed skills confidently in their current learning. Pupils are very appreciative of the good teaching and good working relationships. They made a point of telling inspectors that help is always available and that teachers support and challenge them to achieve well. Pupil leadership is well developed. Many lead community events, for example the Warsash clean-up, and help with reading and music in local primary schools. Others contribute to the work of the school as pupil support and mentors and are reading ambassadors. Careers advice is good, and disadvantaged pupils receive extra help and support to secure college places, employment or training and apprenticeships.

Pupils' conduct around the site is calm and mature. They are welcoming, friendly, courteous and very articulate. They show an understandable pride in their school. Overall attendance is above the national average, and has improved over recent years. This is due to the close monitoring of attendance and a range of successful responses by the attendance officer who works here and in several link primary schools. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils, and those who are disabled or have special educational needs, has been low but is improving.

The local authority works closely with the school to verify its self-evaluation and offer constructive challenge. Local authority officers have a good knowledge and understanding of the school's work. There is rarely any need for intervention but the school knows that it can draw on expert support if it were needed.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- gaps in the achievement of pupils eligible for the pupil premium and others in the school continue to close rapidly and securely
- shortfalls in outcomes in some subjects at the end of Key Stage 4 are eliminated.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Hampshire County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Alan Taylor-Bennett
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

Two inspectors visited the school for one day. They spoke with you, members of your senior team, governors, pupils and a representative of the local authority. A range of documents were scrutinised, including analyses of pupils' achievements and safeguarding policies and guidelines. Inspectors visited 18 lessons to see teaching and learning. They paid particular attention to the progress and attendance of pupils eligible for the pupil premium and pupils with disabilities or special educational needs, and also overall pupil achievement in specific subjects. Responses from Parent View and questionnaires from pupils and staff were analysed.