

# Brookfield Community School and Language College

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116419
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	312299
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 June 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Seal HMI

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>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	1745
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Carol Allington
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Ria Allan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 May 2005
<b>School address</b>	Brook Lane Sarisbury Green Southampton SO31 7DU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01489 576335
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Brookfield Community has an above average number of students. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is low. Most students are White British. The number of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities including those students with statements of special need is well below average. The school is a specialist language college with an extensive range of out-of-school provision including adult education. The school has recently received the Artsmark and the International Schools Awards.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Brookfield Community School and Language College provides a satisfactory standard of education with some strengths. In recent years, the school has been through challenging circumstances. A consequence of these circumstances is there was a shortage of permanent staff, especially at middle leadership level. This hindered the schools' ability to provide all students with consistently good teaching to ensure they made good progress. As a result, although GCSE results in 2007 were generally above average, the progress many students made was below that expected nationally. The senior leadership team that is now in place is beginning to have a positive impact on the rate of progress students are making by improving the quality of teaching and learning. Students' current achievement is satisfactory and their standards are above average overall. Current data indicates that most students are making up lost ground and are on course to do better. This is because of the effective intervention strategies the school now has in place.

Students' personal development and well-being is good. Students enjoy coming to school, which is reflected in the good attendance rates. Students have formed good relationships with each other and adults and this results in a generally calm atmosphere around the school. Some parents expressed their concerns about behaviour, but inspectors found it satisfactory with only a few students causing misbehaviour in lessons where the activities did not meet the students learning needs. Students say they feel safe because they know they can seek advice from a wide range of professionals and other trained students who are 'buddies'. A Year 9 student remarked, 'There is always someone to talk to if you have problems.'

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teaching and learning is now at the centre of professional development. Good lessons feature students working in collaboration with their peers and assessing each other's work. Teachers create the environment for these successful lessons when they are clear about what the students need to know to improve, inject good pace and provide students with a wide range of strategies and activities for learning. There are still too many lessons that are characterised by a lack of focus on supporting students to make progress. For example, some teachers have low expectations and do not plan lessons that meet the learning needs of all students. In these lessons, students are reluctant learners and this provides the opportunity for some students to disrupt the learning of others.

The school has begun to make better progress in developing the international aspects of its language college status. For example, the 'Panjazz' project in music. These activities make an appropriate contribution to students' cultural development. The school is aware that GCSE results in modern foreign languages remain below what they should be. Effective strategies and recent appointments are ensuring that better teaching and systems to monitor students' progress are now in place.

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets the needs of the majority of students. Students in Years 8 and 9 experience a balanced curriculum with the addition of extra language opportunities. At present Years 10 and 11 follow a choice of three different pathways and there is an appropriate range of vocational options. The school has developed work related skills through these courses and the work experience provision. There is some good provision in some subjects. For example, the students and parents rightly praise the work of the music department. The range and quality of extracurricular activities is good and students value the wide range of out of school activities and clubs.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Progress in addressing some of the issues identified at the last inspection has not been fast enough until recent times, but the sense of urgency, and the school's own perceived capacity to deal with these issues has increased in the last year. Significant changes at senior leadership level have been completed during this academic year. Honest self-evaluation means that the headteacher and her senior leaders have a largely accurate picture of the school's strengths and the improvements needed. Specialist college work presents the school with both opportunities and challenges. It makes a significant contribution to the strong partnership work, which is a positive feature of the school, enhancing the international dimension of the curriculum. However, the quality of languages provision for students in the school has not been good enough in recent years. As a result, the specialist status is not making the expected contribution to the agenda for improving achievement.

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

- Increase the rate of all students' progress to ensure higher standards of attainment.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good across all subjects.
- Ensure there is consistently rigorous monitoring of students' progress and the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school.
- Improve the school's language provision to enable its specialist status to have a significant and focussed impact on the raising of standards throughout the school.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Standards are above average and achievement is satisfactory. Students' attainment in English, mathematics and science at the beginning of Year 7 is above average. By the time they complete Year 9, standards are well above average. This represents good achievement in Key Stage 3. Students' overall 5\*A-C GCSE results in 2007 were below that of previous years but still above average. This was mainly because of the good performance in some subjects, including music, technology, history, drama, and physical education. However, in other subjects, such as modern foreign languages, standards were below average. Achievement in Key Stage 4 was inadequate overall in 2007. However, the school has taken appropriate remedial action to tackle this situation. For example, because of the recent and effective introduction of student progress tracking systems, the school has reliable information about all students. This information demonstrates that a higher number of students are making good progress in Key Stage 3 and at least satisfactory progress in Key Stage 4. All groups of students including those with learning difficulties and or disabilities are making satisfactory progress overall.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Although the school has a significant minority of students who can be challenging, the school's inclusive approach has managed to effectively reduce exclusion rates. Students are aware of the importance of healthy lifestyles and enjoy the extensive opportunities to take part in sports. They have a good knowledge of how to maintain good physical health although some of them still prefer to snack on salty food brought from home. Students generally care well for each other and the facilities of the school. Students show a good understanding of other cultures

and their diverse needs. The international dimension of the school benefits the students' cultural development. This has led for example, to a performing arts visit to South Africa. In religious education, students relate to Christian stories from the past and apply them to today's lifestyles. The wide range of charity work gives students time to reflect on the lives of other people and their own. There is a wide range of after-school, twilight, and holiday activities, which are well promoted and enjoyed by students. Citizenship events, for example the 'Youth Parliament' and 'mock trials', enable students to understand the workings of democracy and law. Students are well prepared for the world of work or further education. Most students value education and intend to study further.

Teachers encourage students to take part in group work and develop their presentation skills. For example in a Year 10 business studies lesson, students planned and gave a presentation to explain profitability. Year 9 students find the lessons on how to manage financial matters in working life useful.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The school's assessment of its teaching and learning is mostly secure and processes are in place to ensure there is sufficient rigour in the evaluation of lessons. The school's own monitoring indicates that although about half of the lessons taught are good or better this is not enough to improve the rate of students' progress especially in English, mathematics and science where there is a larger proportion of satisfactory teaching.

The school has new appropriate initiatives and strategies in place to improve teaching and learning. It is evaluating these more systematically. For example, new schemes of work are now in place for Years 7 and 8 and focus more on students' progress. All these measures have yet to make a significant impact on what happens in many classrooms. Teaching Assistants support students effectively and staff appreciate their assistance. They make a valuable contribution to the progress of students with special needs. The appointment of six learning innovators is an initiative with the potential to improve the effectiveness of teachers. The school recognises the need to strengthen the leadership of teaching and learning and is in the process of appointing two new posts which will be attached to the senior leadership team for September 2008.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

Specialist status in languages enhances students' experiences by developing the international school focus. As a result, there are good opportunities to study a range of languages including external provision for Mandarin and Japanese. The international dimension has also developed a strong performing arts provision, which offers all students exciting and innovative music and drama experiences.

New initiatives are focusing on the development of a condensed but balanced curriculum programme starting in the existing Year 7. Planning curriculum change is generally effective and the school hopes to provide a personalised curriculum for all students. Some students who demonstrate inappropriate behaviour in lessons and those who underachieve, indicates that some groups of students' do not have their needs fully met. For example, students who respond

best to active learning and the opportunity to acquire practical skills have chosen to follow a traditional academic curriculum for most of their time in school.

Aspects of the PSHE and citizenship programme ensure good economic, health and environmental awareness. Provision for information and communication technology is good. As a result, the virtual learning environment provides different and stimulating opportunities for students to interact with a wide range of subjects. There are many opportunities for enrichment. Students with identified gifts and talents or learning difficulties and disabilities receive effective support. There are good progression routes into the courses offered in the local sixth form and further education colleges. Planning for transition into Year 7 is particularly effective because of the well-developed links with local primary schools.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The quality of care, guidance and support is satisfactory overall. The school provides good care for its students. There are very effective procedures to ensure safe recruitment. The school has effective and robust safeguarding procedures in place. There is an extensive range of well thought out events and strategies to support younger students when they transfer from primary education, including, for example, a summer-camp to help less confident Year 6 students develop teamwork and leadership skills. Vulnerable students and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well in Year 11 because their needs receive accurate support and the school works well with an extensive range of multi-agency services.

The school has introduced effective strategies to monitor attendance and support vulnerable students to ensure they complete their studies successfully. The school assigns a member of staff to keep in touch with vulnerable students in further education to give them additional confidence. Year 9 students have appreciated the advice they have received to help them make suitable choices of subjects to study in the next stage of learning and potential careers.

Some parents and carers said that they lack information about how to help their child's progress and inspectors agree with them. For example, the written reports to parents are suitably informative but provide little information regarding specific learning targets or how much progress their children have made. Recently introduced computerised system gives teachers better information about students' progress but although most students are set targets for improvement based on National Curriculum levels, they are not given sufficient detail on how to achieve them. Not all marking gives students sufficient guidance on how to improve their work to reach suitably challenging targets.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The school has faced a number of challenges in recent years. Senior management has a sense of priority about improving students' achievement. Most staff at all levels appreciate this. Many staff understand the systems to bring about improvement but these are applied inconsistently. The school has taken suitable action in developing the role of the middle managers' contribution to school improvement. As a result, subject leaders are more accountable for the performance of their colleagues in the classroom. This ensures a focus on the things that matter and a consistency of approach; but it is still at an early stage. Overall, the track record of improvements suggests there is satisfactory capacity to continue to improve.

Governors have a clear picture of the school's strengths and the improvements required. They are involved in key decisions and supportive of the school, particularly in the light of the recent challenging times. However, on occasions, they have an over-optimistic view of the school's performance.

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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
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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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	3
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?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

<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>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

19 June 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Brookfield Community School and Language College, Southampton, SO31 7DU

Thank you for the contribution you made to the recent inspection of your school. We enjoyed the chance to visit lessons and talk with many of you. We also read with interest the questionnaires completed by your parents and carers.

The school provides you with a satisfactory education. Your headteacher and staff are working hard to improve things and we saw these improvements around the school. Some of the good things about the school are:

- you have learned a lot about English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 9 and your test results are above average
- you have some good subject teachers and departments, which include: technology, music, drama, physical education (PE) and information and communication technology (ICT)
- most of you behave well around the school and in lessons that are practical, interesting and clear about how you need to improve
- you have a good range of extra curricular activities, which many of you enjoy
- the school cares for you and has good systems in place to help you stay safe.

We have talked with the staff and governors about the four things they are going to be working on to help the school to improve.

- Help even more of you get A\*-C GCSE results in all subjects but especially English, mathematics and modern foreign languages.
- Make sure there are even more good or better lessons.
- Work with you to check how much you are learning and how good the lessons are.
- Use the school's language specialist status to help more of you get even better results in modern foreign languages and other subjects.

The staff and governors are committed to their work and I hope you will be able to work with them to make the school get even better.

Yours sincerely

John Seal

Her Majesty's Inspector