

Inspection of Brookfield Primary School

Burlington Avenue, Langwith Junction, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire NG20 9AD

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 May 2024

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Requires improvement
Personal development	Requires improvement
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This school has been through a period of significant turbulence. Recent developments have provided much-needed stability. Parents and carers are positive about how much the school has improved. As one parent typically noted, 'I believe that Brookfield has my children's best interests at heart.'

Most pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. However, there are variations in the quality of the education that pupils receive. Some pupils do not attend school often enough. These both affect how well pupils learn and achieve.

As pupils learn how to conduct themselves, their behaviour is improving. They like to have their name put on the 'wheel' for doing something well. However, some pupils become distracted from their learning, particularly when the work is too tricky. A few struggle to control their emotions and feelings. Some pupils do not understand that their peers may need extra support with their behaviour.

A range of opportunities help to enrich pupils' experiences and build their confidence. Pupils take on leadership responsibilities to help out around school. They like learning to play the clarinet. They value time spent with residents of a local care home. Pupils enjoyed trips to the National Space Centre and to the theatre to watch a pantomime.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Staff and governors are determined to improve this school and return it to the heart of its community. Their concerted efforts are beginning to make a positive difference. However, there is more work to do to ensure that all pupils benefit from a high-quality education and achieve as well as they could.

In a few subjects, the curriculum is well organised. Teachers know the specific knowledge that pupils need to learn and how this builds on what has been taught before. In other subjects, it is not clear exactly what pupils need to know or when. When this is the case, pupils struggle to remember important information or make links to what they have previously learned.

The implementation of the curriculum is also inconsistent. Teachers are more skilled at delivering some subjects than others. In some instances, they use their secure subject knowledge to good effect and choose suitable ways to deliver new content. However, in other subjects, a poorly structured curriculum, unclear explanations or inappropriate resources make it hard for pupils to complete tasks and secure their understanding.

The teaching of early reading has improved. Well-trained staff pay close attention to the phonics programme and deliver it well. Close checking quickly resolves any gaps in pupils' knowledge. Books are well matched to the sounds pupils know. Pupils listen eagerly during story times and share their thoughts about what might happen

next. Encouragement from staff is helping pupils in key stage 2 to develop a love of reading.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) sometimes get frustrated because adaptations to support their learning are not always well suited to their needs. These pupils cannot always access the same curriculum as their peers. Targets to help these pupils improve often lack precision. Advice from external professionals about how best to support these pupils is not always considered.

In the early years, adults direct children's learning with skill. They know how best to support each child. Children have frequent opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. They engage readily with books, rhymes and songs. They learn to take turns, ask questions and listen to each other's ideas. They enjoy being creative and using their imagination. Children have strong relationships with adults and play happily with their peers. In the early years, everyone feels like they belong.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are improving. Incidents of poor behaviour and suspensions are both reducing. However, some pupils, particularly pupils with SEND, do not always get the help they need to behave well.

The introduction of a breakfast club encourages some pupils who were previously late arriving at school to be on time. Pupils' attendance is slowly improving, often due to the bespoke support offered to families. However, too many pupils are still absent from school too often.

The programme for pupils' personal development is being developed. Pupils learn how to be a good friend to others. They understand why tolerance and respect matter. They know how to stay safe, fit and healthy. However, pupils' understanding of other aspects, including different faiths and cultures, and important British values is quite limited.

Staff enjoy working at the school. Despite some of the recent changes having an impact on their workload, they feel well supported.

Leaders and governors are committed to their roles and work together closely. However, their plans for improvement do not always focus on the right thing. They are not always clear what is working well and why. Support from the local authority has been helpful in keeping the school's improvements on the right track.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils in this school are safe and well looked after. They know how to stay safe and talk with staff if they are worried about something. Staff report any concerns about a pupil's welfare or safety promptly. The safeguarding team take appropriate and timely action in response, including involving external organisations when necessary.

However, records of these actions sometimes lack important details and are occasionally incomplete.

The school knows the community it serves well. However, the safeguarding team has not used this knowledge well enough to deepen its understanding of the specific risks that may affect pupils. The safeguarding team and governors do not always keep themselves up to date with the latest safeguarding guidance, including in relation to training requirements and changes to recruitment checks.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculums in English, and in the foundation subjects, are in the process of being reviewed. In these subjects, it is not always clear exactly what pupils need to know. The implementation of the curriculums in these subjects is also inconsistent. Pupils' knowledge of these subjects is not always secure. The school must ensure that the curriculum in every subject is planned and delivered consistently well.
- The needs of pupils with SEND are not considered well enough. These pupils do not always get the support they need. They sometimes struggle to access their learning or to meet the school's behaviour expectations. This can cause them to become dysregulated. The school must make sure that the curriculum for pupils with SEND is suitably ambitious and appropriately adapted. It must ensure that these pupils get the support they need to behave well.
- Some pupils do not attend school often enough, particularly disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND and pupils who speak English as an additional language. These pupils miss out on important learning and on wider school experiences that support their personal development. The school should continue its work to reduce persistent absence, so that all pupils attend school well.
- There are inconsistencies in how well the personal development programme is implemented. As a result, pupils' recall of important aspects such as different faiths and cultures or British values is variable. The school must ensure that all pupils benefit from an effective programme of personal development that prepares them well for their next steps.
- Senior leaders' and governors' oversight of the school is not sufficiently sharp. They do not use information well enough to inform planned improvements. Their evaluations of actions to improve the school lack rigour. The school must make sure that senior leaders and governors have a clear focus on what is working well and how the school can continue to get better.
- The school takes appropriate action to keep pupils safe. However, some minor weaknesses in record keeping and training mean that the school's safeguarding practices are not as thorough as they could be. The school must ensure that the school's safeguarding arrangements are suitably robust so that all pupils remain safe.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	112619
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10288405
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	166
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Andrew Brickles
Headteacher	Nicola Walker
Website	www.brookfield-pri.com
Date of previous inspection	30 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- In the past two years, there have been several changes to the school's leadership. The headteacher joined the school in September 2023, initially as acting deputy headteacher. She was appointed as acting headteacher in January 2024. This position was made permanent in April 2024.
- Two new governors have recently joined the governing body.
- The school offers breakfast and after-school clubs that are run by school staff and overseen by the governing body.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders, including a consultant headteacher who is supporting the school.
- The lead inspector met with four members of the governing body, including the chair and the vice-chair.
- Inspectors spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, geography and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, spoke with teachers and pupils, looked at samples of pupils' work and visited lessons. They listened to some pupils reading to a familiar adult. Inspectors also considered the curriculums for English, science and modern foreign languages.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from different year groups. They spoke with pupils informally and observed the behaviour of pupils during social times.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff, parents and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, information about governance and reports of visits by the local authority. Inspectors also considered information about pupils' attendance and behaviour, as well as the wider curriculum.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and the results of Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Rachel Tordoff, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Shaheen Hussain

His Majesty's Inspector

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