

Inspection of Brookmead School

High Street, Ivinghoe, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire LU7 9EX

Inspection dates: 3–4 December 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Early years provision	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe at Brookmead. They enjoy many opportunities which deepen their learning. Regular visits play an important role in pupils' learning. For example, pupils stay at an education centre where they experience Stone Age life. Residential trips develop pupils' confidence, resilience and independence. They visit Celtic hill forts and the Verulamium Museum to learn about Roman times. All pupils take part in music and a variety of sports. The curriculum helps them to learn perseverance.

Pupils respond well to most teachers' high expectations. They like learning new concepts. One pupil said: 'I like challenging myself.' Pupils show mutual respect and tolerance. They work and communicate well together. The school supports every pupil to achieve the aims it sets out. Staff skilfully support disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to do well.

Pupils are well behaved in class and during playtimes. Pupils rarely misbehave. If they do, staff deal with it well, so it does not interrupt learning. Pupils have positive relationships with their teachers. They have a growing understanding of what bullying is. They say it does not happen very often. When it does, they know that staff will deal with it.

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

Leaders have improved the quality of education since the last inspection. They have created a curriculum which aims to deepen pupils' knowledge and skills. It is ambitious and generally enables pupils to achieve high standards. Curriculum plans are well developed in most subjects. They set out the teaching of skills and knowledge in a logical sequence. For example, in history, teachers give pupils regular opportunities to use historical evidence. As a result, pupils deepen their ability to interpret the past. Pupils develop a love of reading. Older pupils speak knowledgeably about the books and authors they have enjoyed.

Teaching across the school supports pupils in acquiring a good grounding in a number of subjects. Pupils are well prepared for the demands of secondary school. Teachers have been well trained to teach the school's curriculum. They have high levels of subject knowledge and teaching expertise. They know how to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding in subjects. Leaders are keen to further develop pupils' reasoning skills in mathematics and their ability to work scientifically. In the early years, leaders have not yet fully developed outdoor and mathematical learning.

All staff are well trained to teach phonics and early reading. Leaders give priority to reading from the very beginning. Pupils quickly gain confidence and learn important skills and knowledge. Staff give very effective support to those who struggle. This prevents them from falling behind. In 2019, almost all pupils achieved the expected standard in the phonics screening check. Similarly, most pupils achieved the

expected standard in the national key stage 1 reading assessments. Pupils achieved very well in the national key stage 2 English assessments in 2019.

Pupils enjoy learning and behave well in class. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond well. Staff teach pupils the habits and attitudes they need to be successful learners. For example, staff teach pupils how to regulate their emotions and support each other. Pupils learn leadership skills by becoming house captains or playground leaders. The school encourages all pupils to take part in the range of clubs it offers.

The school meets the needs of disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND well. Leaders want them to 'keep up' rather than 'catch up'. Leaders provide effective training for teaching assistants so they can support these pupils well. Staff apply their high expectations equally to all pupils. They tailor the support they provide to the needs of each individual.

Governors and leaders clearly understand the school's strengths and improvement priorities. Leaders at all levels are taking effective steps to continually develop the curriculum. They check how well the curriculum helps pupils to gain the knowledge and skills they need. Teachers feel well supported and that their workload is reasonable. Leaders have created an atmosphere of teamwork among staff.

The early years leader has a clear vision. She wants children to develop a thirst for learning and an ambition to succeed. Parents and carers comment that their children have made great progress since the beginning of Reception. Staff help children to develop their vocabulary. They give high priority to reading and writing. Staff present information to children in engaging and exciting ways. They ask thoughtful questions to move thinking on. Relationships between children, as well as between staff and children, are very positive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff understand their responsibilities for safeguarding pupils. Staff are very sensitive to pupils' emotional needs and support them well. Leaders give priority to the emotional well-being and safety of pupils. All staff are vigilant and well trained to spot risks of harm. For example, staff are on duty in the morning to ensure that pupils safely enter the school. They understand the importance of reporting even minor concerns. All staff know and follow the school's procedures. The designated safeguarding lead takes prompt action when a concern is brought to her attention. She keeps thorough records and follows up referrals vigorously.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The planned curriculum clearly sets out the knowledge and skills pupils will acquire as they progress through the school. This is very well implemented and has a positive impact in most subjects. In science, pupils' knowledge is stronger than their ability to work scientifically. In mathematics, their ability to reason and solve problems is not as strong as other aspects of their mathematics learning. Leaders need to ensure that teaching more effectively develops pupils' reasoning skills in mathematics and their ability to work scientifically.
- In the early years, mathematical opportunities in the environment are not as well developed as they are for communication and literacy. Leaders need to ensure that mathematical opportunities are strengthened so pupils can more quickly acquire the skills and knowledge they need.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

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

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	110518
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10111161
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	346
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Gavin Sandmann
Headteacher	Katherine Douglas
Website	www.brookmead.net
Date of previous inspection	22 November 2018

Information about this school

- Brookmead is a larger than average community primary school. The number of pupils attending the school has recently risen from 335 to 346.
- The school works closely with a separately registered club which provides before- and after-school care to pupils on the school site.
- The headteacher is leaving the school at the end of the current term. Governors have interim leadership arrangements in place, pending the appointment of a new headteacher.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We held meetings with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), the chair of governors and four other members of the governing body.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority on the telephone.

- We conducted deep dives in these subjects: reading, history, mathematics, music and science. When focusing on these subjects, we held discussions with the subject leaders responsible for the subjects, visited lessons in several year groups, including the support provided to pupils with SEND, looked at pupils' work, and held discussions with teachers and pupils.
- We inspected safeguarding by reviewing the arrangements for pre-appointment checks carried out by the school, including the school's single central record of these checks. We spoke to staff about their training and understanding of the school's safeguarding procedures. We held discussions with the designated safeguarding leader, and reviewed case files and records held by the school, including records of staff training.
- We held discussions with parents at the start of the school day. We considered the 84 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 84 free-text comments. We considered the 62 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey. We considered the 31 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and we held discussions with staff about their work.

Inspection team

Peter Wibroe, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Ashcroft	Ofsted Inspector
Sam French	Ofsted Inspector

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