

Inspection of a good school: Brooke Hill Academy

Brooke Road, Oakham, Rutland LE15 6HQ

Inspection dates:

19 and 20 March 2024

Outcome

Brooke Hill Academy continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Anna O'Shaughnessy. This school is part of Brooke Hill Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Craig Charteris, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Simon Foulkes.

What is it like to attend this school?

Brooke Hill Academy is ambitious for what all pupils can learn and achieve. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). An improved curriculum provides well-planned and engaging learning experiences. For example, pupils in key stage 1 enjoy investigating friction. As one pupil commented, 'I didn't know science could be this fun!'

The school supports pupils' wider development through a range of experiences. An impressive range of well-attended clubs cater for a wide variety of interests. These include hockey, textiles and business enterprise. There are many opportunities for pupils to contribute to the life of the school. For example, literacy ambassadors help other pupils make good use of the 'Reading Shed'.

Most pupils feel happy and safe at this school. As a result, attendance is high. Pupils are friendly and well-mannered. Behaviour in lessons is respectful. This helps pupils to concentrate on their work. The school has introduced a new behaviour policy. This is having a positive impact.

The majority of parents have confidence in the school. As one parent commented, 'There seems to be a clear direction of travel and a plan in place to improve.'

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

Since the previous inspection, the school has redesigned the curriculum. It is now well sequenced and ambitious. It helps pupils to build up their knowledge in small steps. Teachers check closely on how well pupils learn. This begins in the early years. These

checks help teachers to tailor the curriculum to meet individual needs. Across all year groups, the school keeps a close eye on the support it provides for pupils with SEND. Across the majority of the curriculum, pupils remember what they have learned. However, in a small number of subjects, the curriculum has only recently been strengthened to help pupils to remember more. These improvements need more time to make a full impact on pupils' learning.

Relationships between pupils and staff are positive across the school. In the early years, children enjoy discussing their learning with adults. For example, children in the pre-school immerse themselves in a construction project. A member of staff helps to develop their vocabulary. In the Reception Year, children work well with an adult to produce a bird's nest. Others focus with deep concentration on their observational drawings of spring flowers. They enjoy the encouragement of adults. In other year groups, pupils respond well to help from their teachers. As one older pupil said, 'I like mathematics because adults provide support if you're struggling.'

The school has a well-planned and established reading programme. Staff are quick to spot any pupils who struggle to keep up with the phonics programme. Support is immediate for these pupils. As a result, pupils achieve success in learning to read. The school encourages a love of reading in different ways. For example, live webinars with authors help to raise excitement levels. Pupils are keen to share their enthusiasm for reading. As one pupil said, 'When I open a new book for the first time, I'm transported into another dimension!'

The school prioritises teaching mathematics. Teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic. They recap with pupils what they have previously taught them. This helps pupils to remember more of what they have learned. Pupils talk with maturity and understanding about their learning in mathematics. This also applies to other subjects. One pupil commented, 'I like history because I like to think about how things have developed over time.'

Pupils appreciate their learning experiences beyond the classroom. As well as enjoying many clubs, pupils are eager to take on leadership responsibilities. These include being 'reception rangers', 'eco councillors' and 'art ambassadors'. Playground leaders work with staff to improve the lunchtime experience for pupils. They set up and run an interesting assortment of games. The school is working to broaden pupils' horizons in different ways. For example, pupils visit places of worship and take part in community events. Many learn musical instruments. Large numbers travel further afield to attend large musical events. Pupils learn about people from different backgrounds. They show respect for others. However, the school does not have a consistent approach to teaching pupils about British values. As a result, some pupils do not have a clear enough understanding of these.

Governors and trustees have an accurate view of the strengths of the school. They work well with the CEO and with school leaders. Together, they share a clear vision for the future. Leaders consider staff workload and well-being when making decisions. Morale is high and staff feel valued. They are proud to work at the school. The majority of parents are positive about the school. However, some parents feel that communication between home and school is not always as effective as it could be. They are concerned that the

school does not always respond to issues they raise in a timely manner. Some say that they do not feel fully informed.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There have been recent changes to improve the curriculum. These changes are ongoing, with some at an earlier stage of implementation than others. The school should continue to implement and refine the amended curriculum so that pupils can deepen their knowledge securely and consistently over time.
- The school's plans for teaching British values are not yet fully developed. As a result, some pupils do not have an age-appropriate depth of understanding of the British values they have been taught. The school should ensure that all pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of the key values that are important in Britain today.
- Some parents feel that communication between home and school is not as effective as it could be. They are concerned that the school does not always respond to issues they raise in a timely manner. Some say that they do not feel fully informed. The school should improve communication systems so that all parents feel fully involved and informed about their child's education.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2015.

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	137358
Local authority	Rutland Council
Inspection number	10324135
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	311
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Simon Foulkes
CEO of the trust	Craig Charteris
Headteacher	Anna O'Shaughnessy
Website	www.brookehillacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	7 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative education provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and other leaders. The inspector spoke with groups of staff and pupils. He met with members of the governing body and with trustees. The inspector also met with the CEO of the multi-academy trust.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, looked at samples of work and spoke to pupils about their learning. The inspector listened to pupils reading aloud to a

familiar adult. He also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in a range of other subjects.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around the school site.
- The inspector spoke with parents and carers at the school gate. He also considered the responses to Ofsted's survey, Ofsted Parent View, and to Ofsted's staff survey.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including school improvement plans and minutes of governors' meetings.

Inspection team

Martyn Skinner, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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