

Inspection of a good school: Brookfield Junior School

Brookfield Junior School, Swallow Road, Larkfield, Aylesford, Kent ME20 6PY

Inspection dates:

28 and 29 March 2023

Outcome

Brookfield Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love the inclusive and welcoming atmosphere in this school. They enjoy many sociable experiences held in themed areas at lunch and break times. Pupils choose to read in the inspiring library zone, play board games in the geek zone, or enjoy yoga in the hub. Leaders are passionate that pupils will feel safe, happy and ready for the next stage of their education. They are taking effective action to ensure that all pupils attain well, and pupils' work shows they are learning the intended, ambitious curriculum.

Leaders have high behaviour expectations. On the rare occasions that bullying happens, they take swift action to stop it and support pupils involved. Pupils concentrate well in class, walk round school calmly and speak maturely with visitors. Teachers listen to pupils' concerns and help them make good behaviour choices. As one parent put it, 'The whole-school approach to pastoral care is what sets this school apart.'

Pupils are proud to represent their school in sporting tournaments. They learn how to play in the spirit of good-natured competition in team games such as korfbal, quidditch and hockey. They enjoy attending lunchtime and after-school clubs including musical theatre, forest school, woodwork and programming.

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

Leaders have already established many curriculum areas. Recently, they have worked to further refine other parts of the curriculum such as history, geography and physical education. These curriculum areas are now ambitious, coherent and well sequenced. Leaders have also ensured that the curriculum is broken down into smaller steps so that teachers know precisely what pupils must learn and remember.

Leaders prioritise reading. They recognise that pupils' progress in reading has been weaker in the past, and recently provided further training for staff supporting readers needing to catch up, particularly those in Year 3. However, there are still some inconsistencies in the way decoding skills are explained and this means that some pupils

do not catch up as quickly as they could. All pupils read frequently in English lessons and across the curriculum as they develop reading comprehension skills. Teachers read to pupils every day and encourage them to read a wide range of authors.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They have the training they need and are supported by enthusiastic subject leaders. Teachers adapt the curriculum and explain it clearly so that all pupils access the same learning, and most attain well. Leaders are further developing the way ongoing assessment is used. For example, they are refining the use of questioning, so teachers know immediately and precisely what pupils need to learn or recap. Leaders are also developing ways of revisiting previous learning. This is so that pupils more fully embed knowledge into their long-term memories and keep up with learning the curriculum.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly. Teachers scaffold the curriculum so that pupils with SEND learn the same areas as their peers. Leaders carefully plan bespoke adaptations for them, so they attain well, thrive and enjoy school.

Pupils are taught to be responsible citizens who help others, for example by learning to be first aiders. They are visited in school by the local police, fire services and the Dog's Trust. They develop character through putting the school's expected behaviours of creativity, kindness, exploration and learning into action. Pupils are taught how to take care of themselves by eating healthily and exercising. They value differences, saying everyone would be welcome in this school and learn that there are different kinds of families. As one pupil reflected, 'We shouldn't judge a book by its cover, but treat others the way we want to be treated ourselves.'

Governors and leaders work effectively together. They share an ambitious vision for an inclusive school, where all pupils attain well, feel valued and accepted. They take a measured approach to improvement plans, acting on any staff concerns about workload, so their well-being and work/life balance are protected.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established robust systems to make sure pupils are kept safe. They make sure staff are trained widely in safeguarding issues and are confident to identify risks. Staff know to report any concerns, no matter how small. Leaders work proactively to support pupils and provide the care they need quickly. Leaders work well with external agencies such as the police and children's services to ensure that pupils are fully protected.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe on the internet. They know they should only play games online with people they know and trust.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There are inconsistencies in the support that staff give to pupils who do not yet readily decode text. These pupils are not achieving fluency as quickly as they could. Leaders need to continue to implement their plans to develop staff as early reading experts.
- Leaders are still developing ways of how teachers should check that pupils have understood and remembered essential knowledge. Sometimes, teachers do not know precisely which areas of the curriculum pupils need to revisit. Leaders should continue their work on formative assessment, so that all pupils learn the intended curriculum securely.

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/outstanding. 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2017.

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](#)' 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	118869
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10256490
Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	252
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Colin Langford
Headteacher	Nathaniel South
Website	www.flourishfederation.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 and 22 November 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school provides a breakfast and after-school club.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher. They also met with a representative from the local authority.

- The views of parents and carers were considered through their responses to Ofsted Parent View. Further views of pupils and staff were gathered through Ofsted's online surveys, interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding through scrutinising safeguarding records and discussions with leaders, staff and pupils.
- The inspector reviewed a range of the school's documents, including self-evaluation reports, minutes of governing body meetings, attendance records and behaviour incident logs.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at playtimes. They spoke with pupils about bullying, behaviour and leaders' expectations of pupils' behaviour.

Inspection team

Jo Brinkley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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