

Brookfield Community School

Chatsworth Road, Chesterfield, S40 3NS

Inspection dates 3–4 December 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good		2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good		2
Quality of teaching	Good		2
Achievement of pupils	Good		2
Sixth form provision	Good		2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Students make good progress and consistently reach standards that are above national averages in a wide range of subjects, including English and mathematics.
- Achievement in mathematics is outstanding.
- Students value the good teaching they receive and teachers' willingness to provide extra support through revision classes. Teachers' good subject knowledge inspire students' interest.
- Students behave well in lessons and around the school despite the sometimes, cramped conditions. They are polite and courteous to adults and support each other well.
- The academy's efforts to keep students safe are outstanding. Students say that bullying is very rare and that there is always someone they can go to for support. They have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- The sixth form is good. Students show strong commitment to their studies as a result of consistently good teaching and the feedback they receive. They make a significant contribution to school life by supporting younger students and acting as good role models.
- The curriculum that students follow is well matched to their abilities and interests. It includes a strong focus on promoting students' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- The headteacher, well supported by a strong team of leaders and the governing body, has been quick to establish his high expectations of all. Together, they have ensured that robust procedures are in place to raise the quality of teaching, to ensure students' wellbeing and to further drive improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all teachers set tasks that fully stretch or challenge all groups of students, particularly the most able.
- The quality of assessment, including marking, is inconsistent, so students do not always have a clear enough idea of how well they are doing or what they need to do to improve. Teachers do not always check that students are responding to the advice they receive.
- Subject leaders are not consistently holding teachers in their subject areas fully to account for the progress made by their students or ensuring that all teaching is at least good.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed students’ learning in lessons across all year groups and subjects. Four of the lessons were seen with one of the school’s senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with students, members of the governing body and staff. A telephone conversation took place with the school improvement partner.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at policies, the school’s own assessment of its strengths and weaknesses and its plans for development. They also looked at minutes of meetings of the governing body, records of lesson observations, information about students’ progress, safeguarding documents, and samples of students’ work, including their English books.
- The views of the 130 parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into account. Inspectors also took the school’s own survey of parents’ views into account, together with the 101 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- During the inspection, Year 11 students were sitting their ‘mock’ examinations so were not following their normal timetable.

Inspection team

Mary Davis, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Kevin Sadler	Additional Inspector
Richard White	Additional Inspector
Russell Boulton	Additional Inspector
Joan McPhail	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Brookfield Community School converted to become an academy on 1 April 2011. When its predecessor school of the same name was last inspected, it was judged to be outstanding. It is a stand-alone academy.
- The school is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is below average at about one in nine.
- The majority of students are from White British backgrounds. Just under one in seven students are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Virtually no students speak English as an additional language.
- One in eight of the students is supported through the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for students in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals. This is below average.
- Part-time off-site alternative courses are provided for 20 students in Years 10 and 11 at Chesterfield and Derby colleges, ACE training and TS 2000 Ltd. (Alfreton)
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.
- The headteacher took up his post in September 2014, having previously been acting headteacher at the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching so that pupils make consistently rapid progress by:
 - ensuring that all teachers set tasks that fully stretch and challenge all groups of students, particularly the most able.
 - embedding fully the new assessment and marking policy so that all teachers ensure that students know how well they are doing, what they need to do to improve and check that students respond to the advice they have been given.
- Ensure that subject leaders secure high quality teaching within their areas of responsibility and fully hold teachers to account for students' progress.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The new headteacher is well supported by his deputy, the wider senior team and by the governing body. He has been quick to establish his vision for the school and to ensure that its performance continues to improve.
- The school has established robust procedures to ensure the quality of teaching remains at a high standard in all key stages. Senior and subject leaders take part in the checking on teaching, and well-matched support and training are quickly provided as soon as any underperformance is identified.
- Leaders have a clear view of the school's strengths and areas for development, and high expectations of both staff and students. Any area of underachievement is quickly identified through rigorous tracking and monitoring, and is carefully addressed. For example, leaders were quick to tackle the relative underperformance of boys in English by introducing texts that are more relevant to boys and using a variety of other strategies to ensure that boys are fully engaged in their learning.
- Learning mentors take an active and very effective role in addressing any under-achievement, and revision classes, focused on individual students' needs, are introduced at an early stage. Students told inspectors how much they value this support and the extra classes provided, to enable them to focus on an aspect of their work that needs improving.
- Leaders ensure that all are valued and diversity is recognised and celebrated. The very effective pastoral system helps to ensure that students can talk to adults, feel safe and be themselves. Leaders thoroughly track the progress of different groups of students, making sure that all have an equal chance to succeed and there is no discrimination.
- Leaders check carefully on the impact of the pupil premium on the progress and well-being of disadvantaged students. Although this group is small, many face very challenging circumstances that are a barrier to learning. The school provides excellent care and support for these students and for their families and seeks to raise aspirations, including through a variety of residential courses where students can build self-confidence and teamwork.
- The curriculum is well matched to students' interests and abilities. All have the opportunity to take E-Bacc subjects. A range of offsite work-based courses are offered on a part-time basis for students for whom this is suitable. Students are carefully selected for these courses and their attendance and wellbeing closely monitored. The 'Bridge' provides close support for key subjects in school, where students are also supported by external agencies. In addition, an outdoor education course helps students deal with, for example, anger management or to build self-esteem.
- Independent careers advice is effectively provided, ensuring that all are able to identify their goals and are supported through their option choices.
- The curriculum promotes students' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school provides countless opportunities for students to consider the views of others and to promote acceptance and respect of others' views. This prepares them well for life in modern Britain. A rich array of additional activities such as sport and the arts promotes teamwork and the development of leadership skills.
- The school constantly seeks to strengthen its partnership with parents, who are kept fully informed. Frequent information meetings enable them to be learning partners in their child's education.
- The school leaders have made sure that subject leaders have had the appropriate training to drive improvements in their areas of responsibility and this is now showing a strong impact in some subjects. However, not all are fully holding teachers to account for the progress made in their classes or ensuring

that whole school policies, such as the recently introduced assessment policy are being followed by all.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors give a strong lead in the direction of the school and provide a good balance of challenge and support. Governors are fully involved in the life of the school and have recently reorganised to ensure that their different areas of expertise are used to best advantage. They work well as a cohesive team.
- Governors have a strong strategic role in monitoring and supporting teaching and learning. They make regular visits to the school to gain first-hand knowledge of teaching and learning. They ensure that teachers' pay rises are linked to the achievement of their students and the whole-school targets set for them. They fully support leaders in their constant drive for improvement, and are quick to challenge and research all aspects of the school's work. This includes interviewing both staff and students, for example, to find out their views on bullying and how effectively it is addressed.
- Governors have a thorough understanding of performance data and how the school compares to others nationally. They ensure that they have regular training to enable them to carry out their role effectively. They have been particularly vigilant to ensure that additional funding such as the pupil premium is used effectively and robustly monitor its impact. They promote links with parents well and ensure that both students and staff are kept safe, through safeguarding procedures that are highly effective and fully meet government requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. Behaviour in lessons is good and sometimes outstanding. Students are keen to do well and to contribute their ideas and to answer questions. Relationships with adults and with each other are warm and supportive. Students frequently discuss their learning and help each other.
- Although low level disruption is rare, there are occasional instances in Year 8. However, when it does occur clear strategies that are followed so that students understand the consequences of their actions. Elsewhere, across the school, any disruption is very rare.
- The school site is cramped and some areas in need of refurbishment, however, students' behaviour around school is calm and sensible and there is no litter or graffiti. Students are polite and friendly to visitors and express pride in their school.
- Attendance is above average and persistent absences low throughout the school, including the sixth form. The school monitors this carefully including the wellbeing of those following alternative courses, and provides extra support for those facing challenging circumstances to improve attendance and punctuality.
- Exclusion rates are well below the national average and the school has developed highly successful strategies to support those at risk of exclusion and to improve their behaviour.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Highly effective systems are in place to ensure that there is quick response to issues of safety. The school goes to great lengths to ensure that a few for whom circumstances make them highly vulnerable, are given the support they need. This is provided by teachers and learning mentors, but also through a comprehensive range of external agencies.
- Students say that the school keeps them very safe. Although a very small minority of parents raised concerns about bullying, students are very clear that it rarely happens and if it does it is addressed very quickly by the school. The school's careful record of incidents confirms this.
- The need to keep students safe from a range of dangers including sexual exploitation, drug misuse and cyber-bullying is a high priority of the school and students say that they are very well informed as to how to keep themselves safe. Students support each other very well and sixth form students act as very effective mentors for younger students.

- Derogatory language of any sort is not tolerated. Students recently signed a pledge to eradicate homophobic name-calling, and displays, including television screens throughout the school encourage tolerance and respect.
- The large majority of parents and staff agree that students behave well and that the school keeps them safe.

The quality of teaching is good

- Leaders rigorously monitor all aspects of teaching and the progress that students make, throughout the year. The results show that teaching is good. This was confirmed by observations of students' learning during the inspection and by looking at their books.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge often inspires students to want to learn more and their expert understanding of examination requirements inspires their students' confidence in how to succeed.
- Where students make the fastest progress, teachers show high expectations and set tasks that build on previous learning and are closely matched to the different abilities within the class. For example, in German, students were observed gradually building their knowledge and understanding of how to use the past tense. They were totally engrossed because the teacher kept introducing a new challenge, almost like a new clue in a detective mystery, so students had to really think about their response. Here there was a great sense of fun and students of all abilities were appropriately challenged through effective questioning.
- Teachers promote literacy, reading and numeracy well. Students are frequently given the opportunity to read out loud and there is a strong focus on the technical language for each subject, often displayed in classrooms.
- The promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong across the school. Topics are frequently chosen to provide the opportunity for students to reflect, discuss and form their own views. This includes, for example, comparing poetry from different cultures, or, as in one lesson where students' learning was observed, studying a text, set in the past, about a child with autism. This led to lengthy discussion about the moral issues presented and the contrast with the students' own present day views, of empathy and respect.
- Teachers' marking and feedback to students, although very effective in some classes, lacks consistency across the school. Most students are increasingly aware of how well they are doing and what they need to do to reach their targets. They use a 'green pen' to respond directly to this advice by redrafting passages of their work or make corrections before their work is marked again. A constant dialogue helps students to make rapid progress in improving their work. This dialogue is particularly effective in the sixth form. However, some marking does not always show students what they need to do to improve their work or follow up whether students have acted on this advice.
- A small minority of teachers do not consistently set tasks that sufficiently match the wide range of ability within each class, especially for the most able. Questioning techniques are sometimes insufficiently probing to fully challenge and stretch the most able students. As a result they find tasks too easy. Teaching assistants are used well to support disabled students and those who have special educational needs.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students start at the school with skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics that are above average. By the end of Year 11, the proportion of students gaining five A* to C GCSE passes including English and mathematics is also consistently high. The proportion of students gaining the highest grades (A* and A) is consistently above average in mathematics and science but not in English.
- The proportions of students making and exceeding nationally expected progress in English and

mathematics has likewise been consistently above average. Although progress rates in English dipped in 2014, they remained just above average. There is no significant difference between the rates of progress of students from different ethnic backgrounds or the very few who speak English as an additional language.

- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make equally good progress as a result of the good teaching and support they receive. Teachers are provided with the training and support they need to enable them to support individuals effectively. Students following alternative courses achieve well.
- Year 7 'catch-up' funding is used effectively to support any students who enter the school with limited skills in literacy and numeracy, for as long as it is required. There is a strong focus on the promotion of literacy and numeracy skills across all subjects, with students encouraged and expected to use the technical language required of each subject. Students show a love of reading and often volunteer to read out loud in lessons.
- All students are entered for GCSE mathematics in Year 11. Students throughout the school say how much they love mathematics and great enjoyment was seen in all the mathematics lessons observed.
- The most able students are well supported by the school's leaders to ensure that they make good progress. Most of their teachers set challenging targets and give them opportunities to explore their interests and talents, although in lessons tasks set are sometimes not sufficiently challenging. The school provides frequent opportunities to raise aspiration through, for example, visits to universities.
- Over the past few years, the proportion of disadvantaged students in Year 11 has been small, making a comparison of their achievement with that of their peers difficult. In 2013, disadvantaged students were just over half a grade behind their classmates but at approximately the same level as students nationally in English and mathematics. Provisional results show the gap has widened in 2014. However, as a result of a strong focus by leaders on the achievement of this group, the school's tracking of progress shows that the gap has closed or is closing rapidly in Years 7, 8 and 9.

The sixth form provision

is good

- All groups of students make good progress in the sixth form. Students are keen to stay on at school after their GCSE courses. Nearly half of the students enter the sixth form from other providers. The proportion staying on to complete their courses in Year 13 is above average.
- Over the past three years, standards have remained at, or close to, national averages. There is no significant difference between the performance of different groups of students, including disabled students, those who have special educational needs or the disadvantaged. All students are expected to re-sit their GCSE English and mathematics examinations until they achieve at least a grade C.
- Leaders' monitoring and records of students' achievement over time, show that the quality of teaching is consistently good. Students speak very positively about the feedback they receive on their work. They say the sixth form promotes very good personal as well as academic development, built on strong relationships between teachers, students and parents.
- Good leadership of the sixth form ensures that students are well supported and guided, and that any underachievement is quickly addressed. Any variability in subject performance is robustly addressed and courses withdrawn if they do not meet the school's high standards.
- Students value the support and guidance they receive and nearly all progress successfully to further or higher education or employment. They say that the school keeps them very safe and enables them to support the safety of younger students.
- The sixth form fully meets the current standards for 16 to 19 study programmes. As work-based courses are provided nearby, most courses provided are academic. There is a strong focus on improving employability skills, and all students are offered the opportunity for work experience. This includes the

opportunity for linguists to undertake their work experience in France and Germany.

- A wide range of extra activities enhances students' experience and enables them to develop personal and leadership skills. These include producing videos to support Year 7 and 11 in their transition to a new key stage, Young Enterprise and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. These opportunities are greatly appreciated by students, who act as excellent role models for students in the main school through the outstanding support they provide and the commitment they show to their studies.
- Students have outstanding opportunities to explore contemporary issues; for example, British values and moral issues, including extremism and racism. This supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and their understanding of the responsibilities of citizenship, extremely well. However, their lack of social space in school limits the opportunities they have to discuss such issues informally.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	136548
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	449423

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1299
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	364
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Katrine Pebworth
Headteacher	Steve Edmonds
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01246 568115
Fax number	01246 566827
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