

# Inspection of Brooke School

Overslade Lane, Rugby, Warwickshire CV22 6DY

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Inspection dates: 4 and 5 March 2025

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Sixth-form provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Inadequate

The headteacher of this school is Greg Williams. This school is part of Unity Multi Academy Trust (MAT), which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Tracy Pearce, and overseen by a board of trustees, co-chaired by Jon Dews and Sue Gavin.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Brooke School has improved significantly. The school has sharply focused on providing an ambitious curriculum for all pupils across the school. Through this period of change, the school has remained determined to raise the expectations for what pupils can achieve. The quality of education now supports the needs of pupils here. As a result, pupils' achievements have improved.

The school is calm, and most pupils are settled. A revised approach to supporting pupils' behaviour has brought about positive change. Staff understand why pupils behave as they do. Staff and pupils have positive and caring relationships. Pupils are respectful and tolerant of others. On the rare occasion when unkind behaviour occurs, this is dealt with quickly by staff. Consequently, pupils behave well throughout school.

Pupils now benefit from strong links with the community and local industries. Visitors talk to pupils about the world of work in the local area. This raises pupils' aspirations. In addition, the school has set up a living flat. Students in the sixth form experience what it is like to live there. This prepares students well for independent living in a home. All this supports the school's vision for 'independent, happy, safe' pupils.

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

The school has taken effective steps to improve the curriculum across all key stages. The curriculum starts from early years and clearly sets out what pupils will learn, and in what order. Key knowledge and skills clearly build on pupils' prior learning. For pupils with the most complex needs, activities are suitably matched to support their early development needs. Pupils use assistive technology effectively to access learning such as switches and eye gaze technology, and to record their work through speech-to-text technology. However, in a few areas, subjects have been implemented more recently than others. This means that the school does not yet know the impact of these more recent curriculum areas on pupils' learning over time.

In lessons, learning is mostly adapted well to support pupils' needs. The school ensures that staff have a secure understanding of how to identify and meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school has set clear expectations to staff for how individual pupils' needs will be supported in lessons. However, at times, staff do not always consistently follow the agreed expectations for supporting pupils. When this occurs, this slows down learning for some pupils.

Teaching pupils how to read is high priority. The school has effective systems in place to identify gaps in pupils' learning. Appropriate support is quickly put in place. A diverse, range of key texts have been carefully selected. Parents are invited to reading workshops. These are well attended. Pupils who do not use verbal language to communicate can understand and respond using different communication aids.

The school pays serious attention to supporting the communication and interaction needs of pupils here. There is a wide range of strategies to support pupils to communicate

across school. These strategies include aided language displays, object of reference and signing. All pupils now have agreed communication profiles that set out how to best support pupils' communication needs. Pupils also have additional interventions to teach them how to use assistive technology strategies. As a result, pupils are settled and motivated to learn because they are able to communicate their thoughts and needs better. However, there is some variability in how consistently staff use the agreed strategies and communication aids. This means that, at times, some pupils are not as well supported as they could be to communicate.

In the early years, there have been significant improvements to the learning environment. The outdoor area is well resourced. This helps most children to learn the early years curriculum. Staff understand the individual needs of children and prepare activities to help with their development. However, at times, activities do not always accurately match the needs of some children. This means that some children are unsettled during the day as their needs are not always understood well enough.

Pupils experience a range of wider opportunities beyond the academic provision. There is a strong focus on preparing pupils for adulthood and life beyond Brooke School. For example, pupils manage a cafe at the local church. Pupils access a range of extra-curricular clubs. These include art, sports and singing.

Trustees are ambitious and want the best for pupils. They focus on the right things and check on how well the school is improving. They know the school well. Since the last inspection, the school has seen significant changes in leadership and new initiatives. Staff have worked tirelessly and supported the changes. Leaders recognise how this has had an impact on staff workload and plans are in place to address this.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Some curriculum areas have been implemented more recently than others. This means that the school does not yet know the impact of the new curriculum areas on pupils' learning over time. The school should continue their plans to embed the new curriculum and ensure that it has the desired impact on pupils' knowledge.
- At times, staff do not always consistently follow the agreed expectations for supporting pupils' learning needs in lessons. This includes the agreed communication aids and strategies. This slows down some pupils' learning. The school should ensure that all staff have the necessary skills and knowledge to consistently implement the communication strategies and follow the agreed expectations to support pupils' learning in lessons.

- In the early years, activities do not always accurately match the needs of some children. Subsequently, some children are unsettled during the day because their needs are not well understood. The school should ensure that staff have the necessary skills to plan activities accurately to help meet the needs of all children.

## 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

|                                                   |                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>                    | 145200                                                              |
| <b>Local authority</b>                            | Warwickshire                                                        |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                          | 10344140                                                            |
| <b>Type of school</b>                             | Special                                                             |
| <b>School category</b>                            | Academy special converter                                           |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                        | 4 to 19                                                             |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                           | Mixed                                                               |
| <b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>   | Mixed                                                               |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>        | 203                                                                 |
| <b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b> | 31                                                                  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>                      | Interim executive board                                             |
| <b>Chairs of trust</b>                            | Jon Dews and Sue Gavin                                              |
| <b>CEO of the trust</b>                           | Tracy Pearce                                                        |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                                | Greg Williams                                                       |
| <b>Website</b>                                    | <a href="http://www.brookeschool.co.uk">www.brookeschool.co.uk</a>  |
| <b>Dates of previous inspection</b>               | 24 and 25 September 2024, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

## Information about this school

- There have been significant changes to leadership since the last inspection. The previous headteacher left the school in January 2023. Subsequently, two further headteachers joined and left the school. The current interim headteacher has been in post since April 2024. He was previously the director of school improvement for Unity MAT and had been working closely with the school since April 2023.
- The trustees disbanded the local advisory board and established an interim executive board in November 2022, comprised of members of the trust board.
- Brooke School is one of three schools in the Unity MAT.
- Brooke School is a specialist provider for pupils with severe learning difficulties. The provision also includes pupils with communication and interaction needs, autism

spectrum condition, sensory, medical needs and profound and multiple learning difficulties. All pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.

- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school makes use of one unregistered and one registered alternative provision.

## **Information about this inspection**

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteachers, subject leaders, staff and pupils. Inspectors also met other leaders in the trust. The lead inspector spoke with the chair of the trust via telephone and another member of the trust board. They also talked with parents. Inspectors also talked informally with staff, including transport assistants and drivers.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders from the alternative provisions used by the school.
- The lead inspector met with the CEO and another trust leader to discuss school improvement.
- The lead inspector met with a representative of the local authority.
- The lead inspector spoke to a school improvement partner.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, communication and language, mathematics, history and personal, social and health education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors looked at individual pupils' EHC plans and checked these against the school's provision.
- Inspectors observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils, formally and informally, about their learning and experiences at school.

- Inspectors observed pupils at informal times, including to evaluate pupils' behaviour.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included free-text comments. Inspectors also looked at responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation provided by the school. This included the school's self-evaluation, school policies, curriculum documents and SEND records.

### **Inspection team**

Anna Vrahimi, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Pete Hines OBE

Ofsted Inspector

Dawn White

Ofsted Inspector

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