

Inspection of Brookside Primary School

Copse Close, Oadby, Leicester, Leicestershire LE2 4FU

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 September 2022

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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Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected
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What is it like to attend this school?

At Brookside, every child is a valued member of the community. Staff make sure that everyone can join in special occasions, such as sleepovers at school. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Some pupils attend the specialist provision, known as 'The Riverbank'. They flourish in this setting and in the classes that they join. Parents praise the progress that they make.

Staff know the pupils really well. All pupils can explain who they could tell if they were worried about anything. They say that when things go wrong, adults do sort the problem out. Pupils find it hard to recall any bullying but clearly understand what it is. The playground is a happy place to be.

Pupils are proud of the range of languages that their peers know. They like the fact that many faiths are represented. Pupils say, 'It would be boring if we were all the same!' They look forward to learning more about different cultures.

Leaders have made some changes to the curriculum. They want every child, including those with SEND, to read really well by the time they leave. There is still some work to do to embed these new approaches.

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

Children get off to a great start when they become 'little Brooksidiers' in the Reception Year. Parents say how well they settle. Routines are quickly established. Children start learning phonics straight away. Adults make sure that children get every chance to revisit this important knowledge. Visitors, such as a dentist, bring learning to life. Teachers use skilful questions at story time to check what children can remember about looking after their teeth.

Leaders have recently introduced a more ambitious curriculum in phonics. All staff model the sounds that letters make accurately. They know which sounds pupils know really well and make sure that pupils' books match these with precision. Younger pupils use their phonics knowledge to decode words that they cannot read straight away. They do not always understand what these words mean. Leaders and teachers know that younger pupils need more opportunities to read fluently and with understanding.

Leaders have thought carefully about exactly what they want pupils to learn. In subjects such as mathematics this is sequenced well. For example, pupils practise their times tables until they are fluent. They recall this knowledge with ease when they undertake more-complex operations. In other subjects, pupils find it harder to recall what they learned in previous years and how it helps them now.

Subject leaders are highly knowledgeable. Some of them have had the opportunity to refine the curriculum for their subjects, but not all. Staff appreciate the training

that they have received. They can explain that they now better understand how pupils learn. In a few subjects, staff do not yet have the expert knowledge that they need.

All staff know precisely what each pupil with SEND needs to learn next. They check that pupils have gained each step of knowledge securely. Leaders have adapted the relationships and health curriculum to make sure that it matches pupils' needs so that pupils who need intimate care know that they have the right to say who can touch them and how. Leaders have high expectations of pupils with SEND. They make sure that they have the chance to lead others and share their ideas. For example, pupils based in 'The Riverbank' are proud to be part of the school council and the eco-committee.

Pupils deeply understand what British values are and why they are so important. They can explain what they have learned from exploring the lives of role models such as Martin Luther King Jr. Pupils are curious about the world around them. They can explain what fascinates them, such as the structure of the universe or human creativity. Pupils speak enthusiastically about how reading helps them to learn about other people's lives. They are very well prepared for their next stages of learning. This includes pupils who are new to speaking English.

Governors and trustees check that staff feel well supported. Staff say that their well-being is considered and that they are proud to work at the school. Not all checks that leaders make on other aspects of the school's work are as robust as they could be. Those responsible for governance are improving the rigour of these checks and changes are underway.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils feel safe in school. They know who they can tell if something is upsetting them in the classroom or online.

All staff have had appropriate training. Leaders have made some checks on what staff know and remember. More are planned.

Leaders know the importance of acting straight away when a concern is raised. They make sure that families get the help that they need. Leaders have recently improved how they record concerns. Those responsible for governance are deepening their checks on the culture of safeguarding to make sure that everyone is doing what they say they will to keep children safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There is an ambitious new curriculum in place for the teaching of phonics. However, it is not yet fully embedded. Leaders should ensure that all staff get the chance to become early reading experts. They should deepen staff knowledge of precisely how the new curriculum should be implemented so that pupils become fluent early readers who understand what they are reading.
- In a few subjects, the sequence of learning still needs to be refined. Pupils do not always connect their current learning with what they learned before. Leaders should ensure that staff have the chance to develop their subject knowledge further. They should make sure that subject leaders continue to check what pupils recall and continue to refine the curriculum.
- Some of the checks that those responsible for governance make have lacked rigour. They have not checked as well as they could that the actions that leaders are taking are making the difference that they want to see. Those responsible for governance should continue to challenge the information that they are given. They should make sure that the new systems that they are introducing are checked robustly.

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	145619
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10240598
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	443
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Ross Grant
Headteacher	Grace Brown
Website	www.brookside.leics.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Brookside Primary School has special classes for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. This provision is known as 'The Riverbank'. Some of these pupils attend classes in the specialist setting and in mainstream classes.
- The school became an academy on 5 April 2018 when it joined Oak Multi Academy Trust. When the predecessor school, Brookside Primary School, Oadby, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school uses one alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector spoke with leaders from the trust and the chair of the governing body.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives into the following subjects: early reading, history, mathematics, music and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, spoke to teachers and pupils and visited lessons. The lead inspector heard pupils read to a familiar adult.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors spoke with parents and staff. They scrutinised documents that the school keeps and spoke with leaders. They spoke with leaders from the trust and the governing body.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the beginning and end of the day. They considered the views expressed on Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of staff and considered the opinions expressed through the staff survey.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils in groups and at less-structured parts of the day.

Information about this inspection

Inspection team

Hazel Henson, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Phil Abbott	Ofsted Inspector
Luella Manssen	Ofsted Inspector

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