

Inspection of Clipstone Brook Lower School

Brooklands Drive, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire LU7 3PG

Inspection dates: 5–6 November 2019

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders and staff want all pupils to achieve well. They make sure that pupils throughout the school can read, write and use numbers successfully. This is improving pupils' achievement. The teaching of some other subjects such as history and geography is not as effective.

Pupils are friendly and well mannered. Pupils say that their teachers are 'kind and fun'. They appreciate that staff, 'help you when you need it'. In this positive environment pupils work hard and are keen to learn. Pupils enjoy discussions, for example when learning about different family groups. They show respect for other people's beliefs and opinions.

Leaders carefully choose visits, events and after-school clubs to help pupils develop the qualities that pupils need to succeed in their adult lives. Pupils explained how these experiences also help them to learn more. For example, pupils could confidently describe the features of Tudor homes after visiting some historic buildings in the town.

Pupils feel happy and safe in the school. They can talk about ways in which they stay safe, including when online. Pupils say that bullying is rare. Pupils say with confidence that the adults in the school will help them with any concerns. They say that adults sort out any disagreements quickly.

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

Despite changes in staffing, leaders and governors remain focused on making sure that the quality of teaching improves and pupils achieve well. Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and what needs to be better. They value working with other schools to share ideas and check their own practice. Governors seek training and advice from the local authority to make sure that they carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively.

Pupils learn a broad range of subjects. Leaders have planned the curriculum in reading, writing and mathematics effectively. In these subjects, pupils learn and remember new facts and skills successfully.

Leaders have developed well-designed and sequenced plans for science, physical education (PE), personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and art. Leaders know that in other subjects, such as history and geography, the curriculum is not as strong. Leaders are currently developing teaching plans in these subjects to make sure that pupils build their knowledge and skills more successfully.

In reading, writing and mathematics leaders make sure that teachers check regularly what pupils have learned and can remember. Any pupils who are struggling or who cannot recall their learning get help quickly. Leaders are reviewing

how to check pupil progress more accurately in other subjects so that teachers can identify and address any typical gaps in pupils' learning across all subjects.

Clipstone Brook Lower is an inclusive school where everyone is welcome and valued. Leaders are keen to make sure that the curriculum is right for all pupils. They are evaluating the teaching approaches used throughout the school. Leaders make sure that tasks are well matched to meet the needs of all pupils, including the most disadvantaged and the most able.

Leaders understand the importance of reading as the 'gateway to everything'. Staff have high expectations that all pupils will learn to read quickly. Teachers and teaching assistants are trained well to help younger pupils develop their knowledge of sounds. They check pupils' understanding to make sure that they do not fall behind. Pupils practise their reading regularly and enjoy class story times. Older pupils speak confidently about their reading books and their favourite authors.

Pupils behave well in class and outside at lunchtimes, making good use of a wide range of playground equipment. Attendance has improved over time. The number of pupils who are absent for long periods of time, including the most disadvantaged, has reduced.

Pupils enjoy positions of responsibility such as being members of the school council. They understand the need to look after the environment, and enthusiastically raise money for different charities.

Leaders and staff are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers and teaching assistants adapt lessons well. They provide additional resources that help pupils with SEND to learn effectively and play a full part in school life.

In both the Nursery and Reception classes children learn and play happily together. Staff help children to be independent and keep themselves safe. Children were seen organising resources and sweeping up the sand on the floor, 'so that no one slips and hurts themselves'. Children are kind to each other and proudly told an inspector, 'We are sharing much better now.' Staff work hard to help children to develop their early reading and mathematical skills. Staff assess children well and support any who might be falling behind.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All appropriate checks are made when recruiting staff. Systems and procedures are well known and in line with up-to-date guidance. Staff receive regular, high-quality training, including particular issues that may be present in the local community. This enables staff to report any concerns they have about pupils confidently and quickly. Leaders take prompt and persistent action to act on these concerns, working with a range of external agencies to ensure that pupils' needs are met sensitively and

effectively. The family worker builds positive relationships with vulnerable pupils and their families. This helps to improve pupils' attendance and experience of school life.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is sufficiently well planned and sequenced in reading, writing, mathematics and most foundation subjects. Leaders are in the process of improving their plans for subjects such as history and geography, where the sequence of knowledge and skills for pupils to learn well is not as securely in place. Leaders need to continue to implement their plans effectively.
- In subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics, leaders need to make sure that teachers use the school's chosen teaching approaches effectively so that all pupils achieve their best, in particular that tasks are adapted to meet the needs of the most disadvantaged pupils and that the most able pupils are given work that challenges them sufficiently.
- Leaders need to continue developing a system to assess pupils' achievement across the foundation subjects. This will enable teachers to check what pupils know, understand and have remembered long term. Additionally, this will help teachers to make the right decisions about what pupils need to practise, reinforce or revisit to secure their learning.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	109521
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10110226
Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	235
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Laura Winton
Headteacher	Sally Reay
Website	clipstonebrook.beds.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 October 2018

Information about this school

- Most pupils come from White British backgrounds, with a few from minority ethnic groups, including Gypsy, Roma and Travellers of Irish heritage.
- In September 2019 the school changed its nursery admission from a 15-hour termly intake to an annual intake with a 30-hour offer.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.
- The current headteacher joined the school in September 2017, as did one of the assistant headteachers and the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo). There have been further changes in leadership and staffing: the early years leader joined the school in September 2019 and the English and mathematics leaders took up their roles in September 2019.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- As part of this inspection, inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, who is one of the designated safeguarding leaders, and one of the assistant headteachers. Inspectors also met with the English, mathematics, science, PE,

history, geography, art and PSHE leaders; the SENCo, the office manager and the family worker.

- The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body, the vice-chair and two other governors. Additionally, the lead inspector met with a local authority adviser to discuss their work with the school.
- The subjects of reading, mathematics, PE, PSHE, science, history, geography and art were considered as part of this inspection. Inspectors spoke to curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at a range of pupils' work and met with teachers and pupils. Inspectors also observed some pupils reading to staff and talked to pupils about their reading habits.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally in class and around the school at breaktimes to seek their views about the school. One inspector attended an assembly.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's website and a range of school documents, including the school's own evaluation, improvement plans, and records about behaviour, safeguarding children and attendance.
- Inspectors considered the 42 responses made by parents to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the 42 responses to Ofsted's free-text system. Inspectors also spoke to some parents at the start of the school day. Additionally, inspectors took account of the 32 responses to Ofsted's online staff survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey.
- The transition arrangements for quality of education apply to this inspection.

Inspection team

Fiona Webb, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Simon Harbrow

Ofsted Inspector

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