

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Clipstone Brook Lower School

Brooklands Drive, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire LU7 3PG

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 March 2025

Outcome

Clipstone Brook Lower School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending Clipstone Brook Lower School. They firmly believe in the school rules of Ready, Respectful, Safe. These guide their conduct. Pupils reflect these principles in their attitudes towards each other every day. They are proud that kindness is at the heart of the school's values. They trust that the school is, in the words of many, 'a very safe place to be'. This is because staff and pupils look out for each other. Pupils make an important contribution to the school community, for example by becoming an office monitor or a 'buddy' to younger children. These roles help to develop pupils' self-esteem and confidence.

Typically, pupils meet the school's high expectations. They are proud of their own positive conduct and that of others. They are confident that staff will sort out any problems that may occur, quickly and fairly. Pupils are empathetic towards those who need extra support in managing their emotions.

Pupils achieve well in most subjects. They work hard and learn to concentrate. This begins in the early years and continues over time. Pupils are enthusiastic learners. They enjoy their lessons. These include those held as part of the school's outdoor wooded learning area.

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

The school has carefully developed its curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of all pupils. Curriculum content progresses in a logical sequence, ensuring that knowledge and concepts are revisited and embedded. Consequently, pupils' knowledge builds securely. The school provides effective support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff provide specific strategies to ensure that pupils with SEND learn

what they need. Consequently, pupils with SEND achieve well in relation to their starting points.

The school has prioritised effective training to ensure that teachers successfully adapt their teaching to increase pupils' accessibility to the curriculum. This approach benefits all pupils. Staff's strong subject knowledge across most subjects enables them to present information clearly, and to identify and promptly address any misconceptions. This ensures that pupils develop increasingly secure knowledge, as seen, for example, in their rapidly improving recall of multiplication tables.

Early years children are happy and settled. They show curiosity and enjoyment in their learning because of purposeful and interesting learning activities. Adults know when children need extra support and ensure this is provided effectively. By the time they reach the end of the Reception Year, children are ready for Year 1.

The school is determined that all pupils will learn to read. Well-trained staff focus sharply on pupils' progress in phonics and swiftly provide effective, extra help if pupils fall behind. The school ensures that pupils receive frequent opportunities to practise reading books that are well matched to the sounds they know. This develops pupils' confidence and fluency. Consequently, pupils are well-prepared for the advanced reading expected of them across subjects further up the school. However, the school does not maintain the same sharp focus on early writing. Consequently, pupils do not progress as strongly through the writing curriculum. Occasionally, pupils do not have secure enough early writing knowledge to complete the tasks expected of them. This leads to gaps in their basic knowledge, such as spelling.

Pupils' conduct is respectful in lessons and at breaktimes. Lessons are typically calm and purposeful, allowing pupils to focus on their learning. Staff follow effective, well-established systems to support any pupils whose behaviour is occasionally more challenging. The school meticulously investigates any behaviour incidents and provides effective support to minimise recurrence. The school rightly expects all pupils to attend school and achieve well. Attendance is improving due to the school's supportive, rigorous and personalised approach.

The school's effective personal development programme supports pupils to become confident, well-rounded individuals. Pupils develop a positive work ethic, making them ready for new challenges. They become confident to forge positive relationships with those from different backgrounds and cultures, and with those whose needs differ from their own. Pupils experience and learn about British values, such as democracy, through firsthand experiences, including being involved in school elections.

The school has an accurate view of what needs to improve. It has recently made effective changes to a range of aspects of the school's work. Staff appreciate the consideration given to their workload in implementing the required changes. Governors maintain a close oversight of the school and meet their statutory responsibilities effectively. They are successful in holding the school to account for their actions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils occasionally do not have a secure enough early writing knowledge to complete the tasks expected of them. This leads to gaps in pupils' fundamental knowledge, such as spelling, leaving some pupils less well prepared than they should be as they progress through the school. The school should check more rigorously that pupils progress through the early writing curriculum as intended, and ensure that staff have the expertise they need to deliver it consistently effectively.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in January 2015.

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

Unique reference number	109521
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10345088
Type of school	First
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	300
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Karen Pearce
Headteacher	Sarah Orr
Website	www.clipstonebrooklower.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	5 and 6 November 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up the post in September 2024.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in this evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held discussions with two governors, including the chair.
- The inspector held discussions with school leaders and staff.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector observed the behaviour of pupils during lesson visits and breaktimes and talked with them to understand their views of the school.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.
- The inspector considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. The inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Judith Sumner, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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