

Inspection of a good school: Breckland School

Crown Street, Brandon, Suffolk IP27 0PE

Inspection dates:

22 and 23 November 2022

Outcome

Breckland School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at Breckland School. Pupils are looked after well by staff, particularly their 'mentors' who they see every day. There are plenty of places to go or adults to speak to if pupils have a worry or concern. Pupils' opinions and concerns are taken seriously. Incidents of bullying, or prejudicial language, are dealt with swiftly and stopped from spreading or getting worse. Pupils are respectful to each other and to staff.

Pupils are polite and considerate to others. Poor behaviour is not a concern for pupils. Staff deal with behaviour consistently well. Lessons are calm and rarely disrupted. Pupils focus on their learning. They want to do well.

Pupils access a well-considered personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme. This is delivered effectively by staff and mentors. Consequently, pupils are knowledgeable about diversity, equalities and how to keep safe in an age-appropriate way. Pupils take part in a wide range of lunchtime and after-school clubs, including different sports and activities, like 'needle felting'. Pupils value the new library as they enjoy access to a range of books. Pupils' experiences prepare them well for their next steps in the wider world.

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

Since the previous inspection report, leaders have evaluated and improved the school curriculum. For instance, leaders have changed how the curriculum is designed, so that pupils have enough time to study their chosen subjects in depth. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), access a broad range of subjects that match the ambition of the national curriculum. As a result of the curriculum changes, the number of pupils studying the English baccalaureate is increasing.

With support from the trust, leaders have provided guidance to teachers about what to teach and when. Leaders have set out the key knowledge that pupils will learn in a logical

order. This helps pupils to deepen their understanding as they progress through the school.

Leaders ensure teachers have the training and development they need to teach the curriculum well. Teachers consistently follow the 'Breckland Basics', which outline effective practices to support pupils' learning in the classroom. During lessons, teachers check if any pupils do not understand an idea or need further help with their learning. Assessment is closely linked to the taught knowledge and so shows teachers what pupils know and have remembered over time. Pupils, on the whole, achieve well.

Most pupils with SEND receive effective emotional and academic support that is linked closely to their needs. Many staff support pupils with SEND well. However, some teachers do not make the right adaptations to their teaching to help pupils with SEND sufficiently. In these instances, pupils with SEND do not make the same progress as their peers.

Leaders' approach to supporting the weakest readers is working well. Pupils who find reading tricky are spotted quickly. Staff provide effective support to help these pupils to become confident and fluent readers.

Leaders' expectation that everyone will behave well is embraced by pupils and staff alike. Teachers use the school's behaviour systems consistently, so that learning is rarely disrupted. When necessary, staff provide effective care and support to get pupils' behaviour back on track. Pupil forums, like the 'student leadership team' allow pupils to share worries or concerns with leaders. This leads to changes, for instance increasing staff presence around the school, so pupils feel safe.

The PSHE curriculum helps pupils to become confident, responsible members of the school community. Additionally, a well-considered careers programme prepares pupils effectively for their next steps when they leave the school.

Leaders and the trust have made many recent changes to refine the school's curriculum further. This has led to an increase in staff workload. Leaders and the trust work closely with staff to help them manage this well. As a result, staff feel leaders support them, including with their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive comprehensive training, so that they know how to spot if a pupil is at risk of harm. There are clear systems in place to report any concerns effectively.

Safeguarding records are detailed and demonstrate that appropriate actions are taken to keep pupils safe. Leaders work with many different organisations and agencies to ensure vulnerable pupils and their families receive the support that they need.

Leaders plan age-appropriate lessons and opportunities to teach pupils how to keep safe. As a result, pupils have a good understanding about issues, like e-safety and the risks of county lines.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A small number of teachers do not make the right adaptations or changes to their teaching to support pupils with SEND consistently well. In these instances, pupils with SEND find learning more tricky than if they had better support. Leaders should ensure all staff help all pupils, including those with SEND, to learn successfully across all the whole curriculum.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2017.

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	138250
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10255169
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	549
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Christine Quinn
Headteacher	Jon Winn
Website	www.brecklandschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	19 - 20 September 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school joined the Unity Schools Partnership Trust in July 2022.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The requirements of the Baker Clause are met which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this ungraded inspection under section 8 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 this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, geography and art. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited a sample of

lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils about learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.

- The lead inspector met with curriculum leaders for modern foreign languages and science to discuss the quality of education in those subjects.
- Inspectors met with a range of leaders. This included the school's special educational needs coordinator, the school's literacy lead and other members of the senior leadership team.
- The lead inspector scrutinised a range of school documents, including the behaviour and bullying logs.
- Inspectors met with a range of pupils from different year groups.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the trust and governing body, including the chief executive officer of the trust.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector met with the school's safeguarding leaders. Inspectors looked closely at safeguarding systems, processes and records. They spoke with pupils, staff, governors and trustees about safeguarding.
- The lead inspector considered the school's own pupil surveys.
- Inspectors considered the 95 responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 93 free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the 38 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and the 199 responses to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Damian Loneragan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jim McAtear

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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