

Bredon Hill Middle School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116956
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	326502
Inspection dates	1 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Ted Wheatley

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	10–13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	450
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roger Umpelby
Headteacher	Steven Charlton
Date of previous school inspection	11 May 2006
School address	Elmley Road Ashton-under-Hill Evesham Worcestershire WR11 7SW
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

- Whether the downward trend in mathematics results at the end of Key Stage 2 has been reversed.
- How well the school recognises underachievement by any pupils and deals with it.

Evidence was gathered from data on current standards and achievement, examination of pupils' work and school documents, observation of lessons, discussions with the headteacher, governors and staff, and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments of these areas, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The school is in a rural setting and serves several local villages. Attainment is above average on entry and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. The great majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds, and there is a very small proportion who speak English as an additional language.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. It is improving and pupils' personal development, the quality of care, guidance and support, and leadership and management are outstanding. The great majority of parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire feel the school provides a good education and is well led. They are particularly appreciative of the way the school looks after their children. Typical comments are, 'We have been really pleased with the school, the opportunities the children have across such a wide range of subjects and activities', and, 'We have access to the appropriate staff and matters are dealt with in a caring and efficient way.'

Standards are above average overall and in English and science they are high. Pupils' speaking skills are particularly good. They talk confidently and can hold their own in a serious discussion or argument, giving their own explanations clearly and succinctly. For most pupils, writing skills are equally high, but for a small proportion they are not quite so good. Some written work, especially spelling, is a little careless and sometimes marking misses the chance to encourage accuracy. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to write in other subjects. In mathematics, standards are a little above average and improving after a period of lower standards than in other subjects. The school provides effective individual support for pupils and has established very good working relationships with feeder schools to help promote better progress in mathematics. Pupils achieve well overall. This is because teaching is consistently good and sometimes excellent. Lessons are challenging, work is matched well to pupils' learning needs, whatever their abilities, and excellent relationships ensure pupils feel confident to discuss their understanding with each other or to explain to the whole class. The pace of learning is fast and pupils enjoy lessons and work hard. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make outstanding progress because they are excellently supported and the school is quick to use external services to provide expert support where necessary.

Pupils' experience at school is supported by a good and improving curriculum. The school is working effectively to establish links between subjects and also to seek creative ways to make the curriculum interesting. For example, pupils enhance their learning in science by writing poetry about aspects of their work. They have opportunities to learn German and Spanish as well as French and some religious education is taught in French. There is a good range of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum and all pupils experience residential trips. In particular, pupils enthuse about the trips to Belarus, Norway, Italy, Holland and Germany. The range of out of school activities is good, and the school is hoping to improve this with more involvement of pupils in drama activities. The personal, social, health education and citizenship programme is extensive and supports pupils' development of personal responsibility and excellent social skills.

Pupils' personal development is excellent. They have a first-class understanding of how to stay healthy and safe, and the great majority take part in physical activities and eat sensibly. They welcome the school's approach to promoting healthy eating. Pupils take on a wide range of responsibilities. School council members have initiated the introduction of water fountains, provision of lockers and refurbishment of the changing rooms. The eco group plays an important part in encouraging pupils to save energy and to recycle materials. Other responsibilities include being prefects

and form, house or sports captains, all of which pupils carry out enthusiastically and maturely. Pupils' attendance is good and they enjoy school. Their behaviour is excellent and, although some pupils report past poor behaviour, they say such incidents are rare and the school approach to encouraging pupils to take personal responsibility for their behaviour works well. They also report that learning is never interrupted by unacceptable behaviour. Pupils also said that, while bullying does happen occasionally, it is always dealt with swiftly and effectively, and that if pupils want to remain anonymous, their wishes are respected. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils have an excellent knowledge of the values and beliefs of different cultures across Europe and this is widening as the school attempts to establish links with schools in different parts of Britain and beyond Europe. Given the high standards of English and improving standards in mathematics, and excellent social skills, pupils are well prepared for their future lives.

The quality of care, guidance and support is exceptional. The school meets all statutory requirements for safeguarding and procedures to ensure pupils' safety are thorough and rigorous. Pastoral care is excellent and pupils report they have a member of staff they can go to if they have any concerns. Academic guidance is excellent, and despite marking which does not always provide enough reinforcement, pupils know how well they are performing. They understand how their work has been assessed, what their targets are and what they need to do to achieve them.

Leadership and management are outstanding. Leaders at all levels have an excellent grasp of how well the school performs and the areas it needs to improve. Staff work effectively to bring about improvements and they receive exceptional support and direction from the headteacher. Staff make a concerted effort to raise standards in mathematics, and they are being successful, although they rightly recognise that this effort must be sustained to ensure standards catch up with those in other subjects. The capacity for further improvement is excellent, the issue from the previous inspection has been addressed and governors play a significant part in supporting and challenging the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all pupils write and spell accurately and improve their writing skills through planned opportunities to write in other subjects.
- Ensure that marking gives effective reinforcement to the high quality academic guidance and target setting.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B

2 July 2009



Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bredon Hill Middle School, Ashton-under-Hill, WR11 7SW.

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school. I spoke to quite a few of you and you gave me some useful information about how good you think your school is and you were enthusiastic about why you like it so much.

These are the main things I found out about your school.

- You are at a good and improving school. The headteacher, staff and governors work exceptionally well to make sure it continues to improve.
- You make good and sometimes excellent progress. You do very well in English and science and in mathematics your progress is improving fast.
- Teaching is good and sometimes excellent. The range of subjects, visits and activities you experience are good, and improving. The opportunities to visit other countries in Europe are especially good.
- You work very hard and your behaviour is excellent. You are considerate to each other and you behave safely.
- You take on a wide range of responsibilities readily and carry them out extremely well. Other pupils appreciate your efforts!
- You have an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles. Most of you approve of the school's efforts to encourage healthy eating, you eat sensibly and most of you enjoy taking part in physical activities.
- The school is exceptionally safe; adults take excellent care of you. They make sure you know how well you are doing and what you need to do, to do even better.

To improve things, we have asked the school to do the following.

- Make sure you write and spell accurately and have opportunities to write in other subjects.
- Make sure that the really good guidance you receive on how well you do, and how to do even better, is supported by useful marking.

Yours faithfully

Ted Wheatley
Lead inspector