

# Bretforton First School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	116655
<b>Local authority</b>	Worcestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	379280
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 January 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Ceri Morgan HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–10
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	55
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Kate Buckham
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ayse Moseley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 June 2009
<b>School address</b>	New Street Evesham WR11 7JS
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## Introduction

Inspection team	
Ceri Morgan	Her Majesty's Inspector

The school received two days' notice. Every teacher was observed teaching literacy and numeracy during almost five hours of lesson observation. Meetings were also held with pupils, staff and representatives from the governing body and the local authority. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. He observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including: school planning, safeguarding evidence, monitoring of teaching quality, records of various meetings and the school's tracking of pupil progress, and the plans for every pupil with disabilities and those with special educational needs. The inspection also reviewed pupils' workbooks and a representative sample of pupils was heard reading. The responses from 28 parental questionnaires and those from staff and pupils were also considered.

## Information about the school

Bretforton First School is much smaller than most other schools. All pupils speak English as their first language and very few come from minority ethnic heritages. There are three classes and each one is a mixed-age class. The proportion of pupils with disabilities or who have special educational needs is above the national average, but the actual number is small. There are no pupils who have a statement of special educational needs. The school has been through an unsettled period of staffing in the last year because of various unavoidable absences, but these are now settled. However, this situation together with a restructuring brought about by budget reductions, led to some changes in organisation which means there are three classes in the mornings and two in the afternoons on most days. Pupils transfer to the middle school system at the end of Year 5. Very few pupils are known to be eligible for Free School Meals. An after-school club managed by the Governing Body operates on the school site.

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- Bretforton is a good school in which pupils' behaviour and a widespread regard to safety are outstanding.
- Particular strengths observed during the inspection are the caring and supportive ethos evident in school, modelled by sensitive and good-quality teaching. The curriculum has been recently adapted and is good. It offers a thoughtful mix of practical experiences with an emphasis on core skills. It is suitably varied to match individual pupil needs. The small size of the school enables adults to know each pupil exceptionally well and all respond to individual-pupil need with genuine care and sensitivity. As a consequence, behaviour is outstanding. Pupils are impressive in their politeness and courtesy towards all.
- There is a good focus on academic attainment alongside the caring approach and, as a consequence, attainment by age 7 has been significantly above national expectations in recent years. There is a suitable emphasis on reading standards which is leading to such high attainment.
- The progress made by pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. However, the progress made by pupils between Years 2 and 5 in mathematics varies across years and is closer to satisfactory compared to national levels.
- Pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs make the same good progress as their peers. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.
- The school is well led and managed with a rigorous approach to improving quality and a good response to managing change, although some aspects of monitoring remain too informal. The school has particularly close links with its local community that help contribute to the successful family atmosphere. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of their school and appreciate the quality of education it offers.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress made by pupils in mathematics between Year 2 and Year 5 by increasing the opportunities to solve a range of problems, especially for

- more-able mathematicians.
- Ensure that teaching always provides a strong challenge to learners by teachers asking supplementary questions aimed at developing knowledge and skills in depth and to better resolve pupils' misunderstandings.
- Refine the monitoring of teaching and provision by adding greater precision to whom and what is monitored and why. Use the evidence from this to plan future priorities, allowing for a challenging timeline for change and setting clearer success criteria and strategic targets.

## **Main report**

### **Achievement of pupils**

The achievement of pupils is good overall. Pupils start school with knowledge and skills in line with those expected nationally, but leave with attainment significantly higher than that of their peers, especially in literacy. This is most evident at age 7 in reading and writing but continues to age 10. This represents good progress across the school although, unsurprisingly given the size of each cohort, there is some variation between years and subjects.

Particular strengths include standards of reading and writing in both Key Stages 1 and 2, the progress made in the Early Years Foundation Stage and by pupils who have disabilities or special educational needs.

The school measures pupil progress accurately and has regular pupil progress meetings. This shows that progress is especially strong in the Early Years Foundation Stage with some examples of children making almost two years' progress in one year – all pupils make at least good progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in English in Key Stage 2. Although standards in both reading and writing are above average, they are stronger in reading. The small size of each year group makes comparisons between groups of pupils unreliable, but pupils with disabilities or special educational needs make equally good progress to that of their peers.

Progress in mathematics between ages 7 and 10 is satisfactory but improving. This is an appropriate school priority although, even here, all pupils make good progress from joining the school. Basic number work is secure for addition, subtraction and multiplication but less so when dividing – pupils can use standard methods of calculation well. They were seen to recognise familiar notation of measures and have very positive attitudes to mathematics. Multiplication facts are secure for the oldest pupils and counting skills for the youngest. There is a good understanding of place value. However, pupils show a more fragile grasp of problem solving and the ability to apply their mathematical knowledge in different contexts.

There is a very strong focus on phonics (the links between letters and sounds) throughout the school – emphasised in all subjects and not just literacy. This begins at the after school club, where close supervision, high expectations and a close focus on reading through phonics (letter sounds) ensures rapid progress. Support for early readers is successful, leading to high attainment. Pupils have a love of books and can retell stories and discuss characterisation in detail. Oral communication is

exceptionally strong. As a school policy, pupils can self-select books and only very rarely choose ones that are too easy or too challenging. There is a good emphasis on expression when reading aloud.

Pupils show very good knowledge of sentence construction and basic grammar in their writing. They can write at length and use expressive language well. Spelling strategies are secure and used regularly. Pupils show a real enthusiasm for their tasks. They were asked, for example, to write letters to the local pest controller about whether the Troll ought to vacate his bridge so the Billy Goats Gruff are safe. They had to include a rhetorical question, a fact, an opinion and some other details. One pupil wrote on behalf of the Troll, 'How would you want to grow up unloved and friendless?' Such good persuasive writing is routine. Handwriting is legible and usually neat and the emphasis on presentation is helping in numeracy where setting out standard methods requires such accuracy.

### **Quality of teaching**

Teaching strengths include a good use of mini targets, excellent relationships with pupils, clear explanations and lessons planned in detail. A particular innovation is the way teachers take advantage of practical and exciting activities to enhance the curriculum. They are especially skilled in varying work for mixed-age classes. These include frequent visits and visitors. Local-community links are used well. When filming took place for a film in the village recently, pupils took the opportunity to see a life-sized Spitfire aeroplane and reflect about British history. The themed curriculum is being made meaningful for the youngest pupils. Marmaduke the Teddy was expecting huge interest in his party once the youngest children had replied to his invitations and baked his biscuits, for example. This thought kept pupils motivated and engaged well.

Teachers ensure that pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural education is good, although pupils' resulting social and moral behaviour is stronger than spiritual aspects. As a consequence of strong community links and an attention to ensuring pupils in this predominately white school are made aware of the diversity of faiths and cultures in wider society, cultural awareness has been significantly developed in recent years and is also good.

There are some common limitations on teaching quality, however. Questioning by teachers is generally good with an appropriate balance of open and closed questions but does not always follow up on pupils' misconceptions, thus restricting teachers' assessment of understanding. Occasionally, teachers spend too long on lengthy introductions, thus limiting the time taken to complete activities. Plenary sessions are sometimes a summing up of pupils' work rather than a reinforcement of the learning that has taken place. Mathematics teaching is not as strong as that in literacy with teachers showing less confidence in the subject, thus limiting expectations.

Marking is up to date and sensitive. Always constructive, it occasionally lacks specific help to pupils, instead relying on encouragement or 'signing off a task' only with comments such as, the named pupil '... can draw a bar chart'. Teachers occasionally limit challenge in mathematics via restricted questioning, avoiding open problem-solving activities and using imprecise language.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils show exemplary attitudes to learning and are genuinely enthused by their lessons. There was not a single incident of inappropriate behaviour observed during the inspection and in all classes every pupil was on task and working hard at all times. When asked about bullying, pupils replied that it just 'doesn't happen here'. Pupils show exceptional politeness to visitors and courtesy to each other and adults, including inspectors. Teachers have successful and appropriate behaviour management strategies although they are seldom required – usually a 'look' will suffice.

There have been no exclusions in recent years and parents share the view that behaviour is at least good and often better. Pupils share experiences and work well together without asking. In one example, a pupil helped her classmate solve some mathematics problems with patience and skill as she could see 'it would be helpful'. There have been no incidents of racist language or behaviour.

All adults take every opportunity to encourage and support pupils and, as a consequence, relationships are very positive, leading pupils to be given and respond to real responsibility. The eco-team for example is leading on grounds developments and sustainability with enthusiasm. They, together with Class 3, have persuaded the school to buy a piece of jungle in Ecuador to help preserve it. In the parental questionnaire responses there was not a single comment that was critical of current provision. All were very supportive. The pupils' questionnaires were also very supportive and overwhelmingly said they are 'happy to come to school'. Indeed, the staff are of the same opinion, although they are concerned that the recent budget constraints may make professional development opportunities more elusive.

Safety considerations are given high priority. Pre appointment checks and registers are diligently maintained, up to date and accurate. Site security is good. The emphasis on safety is high, evidenced for example, by the recent parental sessions on internet safety for example and fire and road safety emphasised by practical activities such as cycling proficiency tests and visits by the Fire Service.

Attendance is above average at almost 97% and has improved since the last inspection. The school sets itself very high targets here and any pupils who slip are routinely followed up. There is a weekly analysis and only two pupils are below high attendance, both through holiday absences. Punctuality is also good, mainly driven by pupils' desire to be at school because they enjoy lessons so much.

## **Leadership and management**

In such a small school, strategic leadership tends to be concentrated on the headteacher and tasks such as school planning and evaluation tend to start with her. As a consequence, leadership is well organised, thoughtful and has led to good outcomes for pupils. Inclusive but rigorous performance management has enabled a small team to punch above its weight in terms of responsibility as all staff are fully involved in all major initiatives and decision making and teaching quality has benefited – not least from helpful professional development opportunities. There is a

genuinely shared vision which promotes good equality of opportunity.

Governors are supportive and fully involved, maintaining a full monitoring programme. They have secured financial stability at a time of constraint through good decision making and a pro-active approach to change. Open and frank conversations at staff and governor level mean there is an honest and evaluative school leadership team which has consolidated good performance during a period of change.

There are some limitations. The school plan is brief and contains no milestones or genuine targets for evaluation, although this does happen on an informal basis. It has an appropriate planning content but lacks detail and a timeline for evaluation at times. It does reflect the desire to put pupils' best interests at heart, however, and is increasingly ambitious for the future. The school expects all pupils to reach challenging targets in 2012, for example. Monitoring of school provision is in place and accurate but is not precise enough to iron out some year-on-year variation. For example it does not always reflect the school's priorities. Not all staff are fully involved in this aspect as yet and it relies heavily on the headteacher alone.

Parents describe the headteacher as efficient, caring and approachable and who knows pupils well. They also describe the school as a calm and caring place that is very nurturing. This is accurate and demonstrates a good capacity to improve.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



18 January 2012

Dear Pupils,

**Inspection of Bretforton First School, Evesham, WR11 7JS**

I am writing to say thank you for your help when I inspected your school recently. You may recall I spoke with many of you and you were very helpful with your comments. I am also writing to let you know what my findings were.

You are lucky to attend a good school, although one of the reasons it is good is because of your own behaviour. I was very impressed with your politeness and consideration towards each other. I thought your behaviour to be outstanding – so very well done. The school also takes great care to make sure you are safe and well taught. Your teachers work hard to make lessons interesting, help you to learn and give support when it is required. As a result you make good progress. In particular, you do well in your reading and writing. There is some scope to improve your mathematics by doing more problem solving and trying to explain your thinking when doing so – especially for the older pupils, so I have asked your teachers to think about how they might do this.

Your school is well led and managed by your headteacher, supported well by the governors. They are always thinking about what is best for you to achieve well. Despite the recent changes to teaching, they have managed to make sure the school remains a good school. However, I have also asked them to consider how they could improve the way they check what you and your teachers are doing and then convert this into a more detailed action plan. That way everyone knows what is expected and when. I am confident they will do this.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your help and wish you all well in the future. I hope Marmaduke's party went well and I would be very interested to hear what the pest controller thought of the Troll's chance of staying under that bridge.

Yours sincerely

Ceri Morgan  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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