

Catshill First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116658
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	379281
Inspection dates	11–12 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Marian Harker HMI

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

Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	182
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reverend Neil Bennett
Headteacher	Melanie Henderson
Date of previous school inspection	10 December 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. They observed ten lessons taught by seven teachers and held meetings with parents, groups of pupils, staff and representatives from the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documentation relating to self-evaluation, the tracking of pupils' progress, the school improvement plan and the safeguarding of pupils. Inspectors looked at pupils' work and analysed the responses of 37 parents and carers to the inspection questionnaire, in addition to those received from pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Pupils' achievement as they move through the school, particularly in writing, and for pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities and those in Years 3 and 4.
- The effectiveness of the school in improving the quality and consistency of teaching.
- The effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation in tackling weaknesses and improving the performance of all groups of pupils.

Information about the school

Catshill First School is slightly smaller than an average primary school. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups or those in the early stages of learning to speak English are much lower than average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than average. A very large majority of pupils are from White British families. Slightly more pupils than average are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. The majority of those identified have moderate learning difficulties, speech, language and communication needs or behaviour, emotional and social difficulties. There have been a number of important changes in teaching staff since the last inspection including the appointment of a new acting deputy headteacher and a part-time assistant headteacher.

The school has recently achieved a number of awards including Activemark, Eco-schools silver and Healthy School status.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

Insufficient progress has been made in tackling the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. In particular, the school has failed to improve the quality of teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2. Good teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that children make good progress because they are regularly assessed and this information is used effectively to plan for their next steps in learning. This rigour of knowing exactly where pupils are in their learning and what they need to learn next, is not mirrored in Key Stages 1 and 2. Here, expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low and as a result attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has declined and too many pupils do not make sufficient progress as they move through the school. Although pupils' current attainment in Year 4 is broadly in line with age related expectations, progress through the school is too inconsistent. In some classes pupils make the progress that is expected of them or better, but in too many instances their progress either in lessons or over time is inadequate. Pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress due to the diligent care and support they receive in lessons and in meeting their pastoral needs. Parents and carers reflect this in their comments; one parent wrote, 'I would like to thank the school for supporting my child and helping her to settle into school so well.'

During the inspection, half of the lessons observed were judged to be inadequate. This is because teachers' expectations in lessons are too low or not accurately matched to the very wide range of pupils' abilities. There is not enough good or better teaching across all year groups to accelerate pupils' progress. Insufficient opportunities are provided for staff to share good practice or receive coaching to help them improve. Teachers do not take adequate account of the information gained from assessments or their knowledge of prior attainment, to pitch their lessons with sufficient precision to challenge all pupils. Much of the school's assessment data is confusing and difficult to understand. Consequently, senior leaders have not responded rapidly enough to identify and act upon underachievement. Pupils are involved in target setting but too many are not sure of their targets or what they have to do to achieve them.

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The effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate because the monitoring and evaluation of the school's work are not focused enough to secure rapid improvement. The school development plan, monitoring and self-evaluation documents lack precision and a clear sense of how to move the school forward. As a result, systems to secure improvement are ineffective. The governing body is very supportive of the school, but currently has too little impact on its direction and work.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their average attendance and the school's recent successes in eradicating persistent absence. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good and most pupils have a positive attitude to their learning. Pupils report that they feel safe in school and trust the adults to help them if they have concerns or worries. Pupils make healthy choices at meal and snack times and understand what constitutes a healthy lifestyle.

The school's self-evaluation is too generous and fails to analyse the impact of interventions, new initiatives or the effectiveness of teaching on outcomes for pupils. This together with the lack of progress in remedying weaknesses, as well as the shortcomings in the school's leadership and management, do not demonstrate the capacity to sustain improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and rapidly accelerate progress for all pupils in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - making more effective use of assessment information to identify patterns of progress and underachieving groups or individuals
 - ensuring that all pupils understand their learning targets and how to achieve them.

- Improve the quality and effectiveness of teaching by:
 - eliminating weaknesses in teaching and ensuring that the large majority of teaching is at least good or better by autumn 2012
 - sharing good practice across all key stages by coaching staff to improve their practice and improving teachers' use of assessment information to plan lessons.

- Develop leadership expertise across the school to drive improvement by:
 - holding staff to account for pupils' learning and progress through rigorous monitoring and evaluation
 - ensuring that school improvement planning and monitoring are sharply focused on improving outcomes for pupils.

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Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Children’s attainment on entry to the school is lower than expectations for this age, particularly in key skills such as reading, writing and aspects of mathematics. Due to good teaching and effective assessment procedures children make good progress as they move through the Early Years Foundation Stage. Progress through Key Stages 1 and 2 in reading, writing and mathematics is highly variable between year groups and subjects, and is inadequate overall. Progress in writing is weaker than in reading or mathematics. This is because the school has recently focused on improving pupils’ understanding of phonics (the sounds that letters represent) and in improving reading skills. Girls generally achieve better than boys in reading, writing and mathematics.

In lessons pupils behave well, are prepared to work hard and generally enjoy their learning. Pupils enjoy working in pairs or small groups and relationships are harmonious. However, in too many of the lessons seen, tasks were not matched closely enough to pupils’ prior knowledge and skills. As a result, pupils were set tasks that were either too easy or too difficult, limiting their progress. In addition, some lesson introductions were too long, pupils became inattentive and the pace of learning slowed.

Pupils enjoy their role as school councillors but the impact of their work is limited as council members change each term. Pupils’ spiritual, social and moral development is good and their cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils have limited opportunities to meet people from cultures, faiths or heritage different to their own.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils’ behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	3

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

3

How effective is the provision?

The large majority of lessons observed in Key Stages 1 and 2 were judged to be inadequate. This is because teachers’ planning is not precise enough to enable all groups of pupils to achieve well. Assessment information used by teachers to plan lessons identifies those pupils who are at risk of underachieving but does not provide teachers with sufficient detail to plan lessons for the very wide range of ability. As a result, expectations, pace and challenge are generally inadequate and pupils rarely complete tasks in the time allocated. Teaching assistants are well deployed in most lessons and support learning satisfactorily. Pupils’ work is regularly marked, but does not routinely provide pupils with sufficient guidance on how to improve their work further.

The curriculum gives appropriate attention to the teaching of literacy and numeracy while providing pupils with a satisfactory range of enriching experiences. Parents and carers report that they would appreciate more off-site visits to enrich the curriculum further. A new topic based curriculum is being introduced to link several areas of learning, but this initiative is at an early stage of development. Pupils are given an appropriate level of care, guidance and support during their time at school. Parents and carers comment positively on the support their children have received, particularly those who have been identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They also comment positively on transition arrangements to local middle schools.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers have been unable to drive and embed improvements. This is partly because strategic planning and self-evaluation are weak. The analysis of assessment information does not help staff or governors to track pupils’ progress sufficiently well. Senior and middle leaders, many of whom are new to their posts of responsibility, do not have a clear enough view of where the strengths and weaknesses lie in provision and outcomes for different subjects. School development planning is not robust enough to help bring about the necessary improvements in pupils’ learning or the quality of teaching. The quality of teaching is regularly

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monitored, but judgements lack consistency, and feedback to teachers has not been sufficiently focused on pupils’ learning and outcomes.

The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination satisfactorily. Senior leaders collate pertinent information about different groups of pupils and evaluate their participation in school life. In addition, the school can demonstrate some success in improving outcomes for those pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Safeguarding arrangements meet government guidance and all staff have received appropriate child protection training. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. Senior leaders have a secure understanding of the school community and a suitable plan is in place to develop national and international links. Governors are committed to supporting the school. Statutory responsibilities are fulfilled and members of the governing body have completed safer recruitment training. However, the governing body has not held the school sufficiently to account and weaknesses in the school have not been tackled decisively.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Teachers and teaching assistants use assessment effectively to plan programmes of work and activities that stimulate and encourage learning and language acquisition. The indoor learning environment is bright and engaging. There are many opportunities for children to use the outdoor areas and there is an appropriate balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities. During the inspection, children thoroughly enjoyed learning to count using soft toys, birthday cake candles and number fans. Children are well supervised, safe and receive a good level of individual

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care from the staff. Behaviour is good and day-to-day routines are well known by the children and instructions quickly followed. Children made good progress in their learning and personal development.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The response rate from parents and carers to the Ofsted questionnaire was smaller than the national average for primary schools. Those who responded expressed positive views about the school. They reported that staff are approachable, dedicated and caring. Parents and carers expressed above average levels of satisfaction in all areas. They were particularly positive about how well the school promoted a healthy lifestyle. A few parents and carers commented that they would like more information about their children’s progress. The inspection team looked into this and found that the school provides parents with a satisfactory level of information about pupils’ progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Catshill First School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 37 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 182 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	76	8	22	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	24	65	11	30	1	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	18	49	16	43	2	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	49	15	41	2	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	18	49	17	46	2	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	22	59	12	32	3	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	57	15	41	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	18	49	13	35	0	0	1	3
The school meets my child’s particular needs	21	57	13	35	2	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	49	12	32	2	5	3	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	51	14	38	1	3	1	3
The school is led and managed effectively	15	41	17	46	2	5	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	26	70	10	27	1	3	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



13 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Catshill First School, Bromsgrove, B61 0JP

I am writing to thank you for the help you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with those of you we met and watching you work and play. Thank you to the pupils in Years 3 and 4 who completed our questionnaire. You told us that you were happy at school and we see that this is the case in the helpful way you treat each other. We think that your behaviour is good and you know how to lead a healthy lifestyle and keep safe. The school cares for you and gives you helpful guidance and support. We were impressed to see you trying really hard in your lessons. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are given a supportive and caring start to their school lives and make good progress in their learning.

While there are some positive things, overall the school is not doing a good enough job in making sure that you achieve as well as you can in Key Stages 1 and 2. We have asked your headteacher, teachers and the governing body to make some urgent improvements and have placed the school in special measures. This means the school will receive additional help to make these improvements.

We have asked the school to make sure that you all make as much progress as you can in lessons and to make sure that teaching always helps you to make good progress. We have also asked senior leaders and the governing body to look at their plans to improve the school and make sure that everyone understands what they have to do to make Catshill First School a better school.

We want the school to improve as quickly as it can. Other inspectors will visit the school over the next few months to check how well it is doing. You can help your school to improve by continuing to do your best and attending regularly.

Yours sincerely

Marian Harker
Her Majesty's Inspector

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