

# Catshill Middle School

Meadow Road, Catshill, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B61 0JW

## Inspection dates

29–30 November 2016

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The executive headteacher, ably supported by the head of school, provides a clear vision for the school, which is shared by governors, staff and parents.
- Middle leaders, many of whom are still relatively new to the school, have a clear understanding of what is needed to secure further improvement.
- Governors are well informed about the school's priorities for improvement and provide effective challenge and support to school leaders.
- The majority of pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils are confident, courteous and show a high level of respect towards each other and school staff.
- Leaders carefully plan the curriculum to include a variety of enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities. These prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders take effective actions to improve the quality of teaching. Support and development for teachers is strong.
- Assessment systems to monitor progress across foundation subjects are not yet fully embedded.
- On occasion, teaching lacks sufficient challenge, particularly for the most able and most able disadvantaged pupils.
- Progress in mathematics is improving, but is not yet as strong in other subjects.

## Full report

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

- Improve the impact of leadership and management by reviewing and developing the school's monitoring and assessment systems across the curriculum.
- Ensure teaching is consistently good across the school by teachers:
  - challenging pupils, particularly the most able and most able disadvantaged pupils
  - having high expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - using effective questioning to enable pupils to develop reasoning and extend thinking
  - applying a consistent approach to supporting the development of grammar, punctuation and spelling across the curriculum.
- Increase the proportion of pupils who make good progress and raise attainment, especially in mathematics.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The executive headteacher and head of school have high aspirations for all pupils in the school. Their clear vision for the school is shared by governors and staff.
- A number of recently appointed leaders, including the head of school, have settled quickly into their roles. They have a strong understanding of what actions need to be taken to further improve outcomes for pupils. Much of this work has already begun and is supporting the school to make more rapid improvements.
- Leaders draw successfully on a range of external support, including consultants, and work with a range of local schools. The training and professional development opportunities developed through these links support improvements in teaching and learning.
- Senior leaders have planned a well-balanced curriculum that provides pupils with a good range of experiences across a wide range of subjects. Pupils contribute to the development of the curriculum which ensures that it meets their interests. Effective careers information and guidance is provided to pupils in Year 7 and Year 8. Extra-curricular opportunities include sports, music, science and arts clubs. Pupils' experiences are widened beyond the local community and their aspirations for the future raised. Pupils are well prepared for the transition to high school and later adult life.
- Pupils' learning benefits from enrichment activities that are embedded across the curriculum. For example, opportunities such as the 'Best of British' day, European day of languages, inspiring women day and 'boys make noise' contribute to developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural knowledge and understanding. Enrichment activities also prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Systems to help improve the quality of teaching and learning are well embedded. Leaders set challenging targets and provide effective support to help teachers to develop. Teachers mentor each other which enables the best practice that exists amongst the staff to be shared. Leaders effectively challenge underperformance in teaching. There are improvements in the quality of teaching and learning as a result of accurately targeted support and challenge.
- Leaders use the additional funding the school receives for disadvantaged pupils and those who need to catch up in reading well. They accurately identify those who need additional help and provide support to improve their progress. The achievement of these pupils is now improving.
- Leaders ensure sports premium funding is used well to improve opportunities for pupils. There is better accessibility to clubs resulting in an increase in the numbers of pupils attending, including disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders do not always analyse and evaluate the progress of pupils carefully enough in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics to make sure they are making as much progress as they should. Consequently, pupils do not always achieve as highly as they might.

## **Governance of the school**

- The governors are highly ambitious for the school and their drive is supporting the school to make further improvements.
- Governors have a range of expertise and a clear understanding of their strategic role. They have an accurate view of the strengths and improvement areas for the school.
- The governing body holds leaders to account by providing strong support and challenge. They regularly scrutinise information linked to pupil performance and check that the actions taken by the leaders are improving outcomes for pupils.
- The governors review the spending of the additional funding, including pupil premium and sports funding. They check that it is improving outcomes for pupils.
- Governors have ensured that systems to manage staff performance are robust and are used effectively to support improvements to teaching and learning.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Policies and procedures to keep pupils safe are detailed and thorough.
- Staff, including those new to the school, are fully trained about the potential risks to children and are clear about what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil. Pupils, especially vulnerable pupils, are supported well and the school works with a variety of agencies to ensure the right support is in place to help them.
- Pupils demonstrate a strong awareness of safety. They are taught well about how to keep themselves safe, including online, through the curriculum.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved since the last inspection. As a result of better teaching, current pupils now make good progress. Pupils' progress is more rapid when teaching is of the best quality. Leaders know where teaching is less effective and have started to ensure that there is consistency across all subjects.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are very positive. Pupils are keen to support each other and work cooperatively together. As a result, there is a strong climate for learning within the school. Pupils' progress is enhanced by their positive learning attitudes as they strive to achieve their best.
- Teachers use a range of specialist and technical language well to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding in a range of subjects. Pupils are able to use this vocabulary confidently in the different subject areas.
- Teaching assistants provide highly effective support to individuals and groups of pupils. They have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and use a range of strategies to help pupils make progress in their learning.
- A range of programmes, including support from external agencies, are used to help meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This supports these pupils to make good progress.

- Teachers set homework regularly and in line with the school's policy to consolidate and deepen learning. Pupils talk positively about the homework they complete and how it helps them.
- Assessment systems are consistently applied across the school. They accurately reflect pupils' attainment because standards of work are checked with colleagues from other schools. Teachers use this information accurately to plan for the next steps in pupils' learning which contributes to good rates of progress. However, some planning does not take this information into account leading to slower progress being made in some subjects, including mathematics.
- Pupils learn best when teachers set challenging tasks which deepen their understanding. Teachers use questions skilfully to further stretch pupils' thinking. However, teachers do not always have the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve from their starting points. Consequently, not all teaching provides sufficient challenge to ensure that pupils make the progress of which they are capable. This is especially so for the most able pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged.
- Pupils' written work reflects variation in teaching quality and pupils' progress. Where teachers' expectations are highest, for example in English, pupils' work is well presented and of a high quality. It is marked in line with the school's assessment policy with pupils acting upon teachers' comments to improve their work. In other subjects, including mathematics, the quality of feedback and presentation of work is more varied. Subsequently, less progress is made, especially in mathematics.
- Leaders have identified that the teaching of grammar, punctuation and spelling needs to be further developed with the skills being applied across all subjects. Improvements that have been made are recent and not sufficient.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The pupils of Catshill Middle School are polite, courteous and respectful. They learn together cooperatively and provide each other with positive and constructive feedback on their work. As a result, pupils learn from each other as well as from their teachers.
- The welfare team ensure that vulnerable pupils are not left out of social groups during breaktimes. If a pupil appears isolated, adults intervene quickly to include them with other pupils ensuring positive social experiences with their peers.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in a variety of ways. For example, pupils in Year 6 learn about cyber bullying and how to use electronic communication safely. Other organisations such as the NSPCC and the police visit the school to work with pupils to develop their understanding of safety. Pupils can talk confidently about how to keep themselves safe.
- Bullying is rare and dealt with quickly and effectively if it does occur. Pupils say that they know who to go to for help and feel they are supported and looked after well.

Parents agree overwhelmingly that pupils are well cared for.

- The curriculum is designed carefully to provide pupils with a range of opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding in all their subjects. For example, in physical education there is a strong focus on developing team skills as well as practical skills to develop an understanding of fair play and cooperation.
- Teachers take opportunities to ensure that pupils have a good awareness of fundamental British values. For example, inspectors observed an assembly which explored links between slavery and modern slavery. This topic was delivered sensitively and the pupils' understanding of the issues was clearly developed.
- Vulnerable pupils are supported well. The school works with a range of agencies to ensure that any additional support needed is put in place quickly.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' attendance is similar to the national average. Leaders take punctuality seriously and pupils' lateness is recorded and followed up. The school has effective and rigorous systems in place to work with families to improve attendance and punctuality. Consequently, the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school is reducing.
- Pupils understand the clear rewards and sanctions in place to support positive conduct. They believe the system is effective in ensuring there is good behaviour in the school.
- Pupils move sensibly around the school and display positive behaviour towards each other and other adults during social times. As a result of this, the school is calm and orderly.
- Pupils are well mannered and are keen to do well. They work hard and support each other. This creates a positive learning environment. All the staff agree that behaviour is good.
- Pupils wear their uniforms well and are proud of their school. Although pupils behave well and work hard, some do not always take full pride in the presentation of their work. As a result, the work in some subjects is not of the best quality.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Pupils' attainment when they start school is broadly in line with national averages. Leaders' analysis of assessment information shows that pupils achieve standards above average in English and mathematics by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 8.
- Progress in reading and writing by the end of key stage 2 is in line with national averages. Currently, rates of pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics are showing signs of further improvement.
- Support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective.

This helps them to make similar rates of progress to other pupils.

- Disadvantaged pupils in school now make similar rates of progress to other pupils. Where there have been differences in their progress and attainment in the past, these are now diminishing.
- Leaders set ambitious progress targets for pupils across all subjects. There are higher expectations for pupils' progress. Pupils make strong progress in many subjects.
- Pupils understand their targets well and use them in their lessons. As a result, pupils know where they are in their learning and what they need to achieve next. This supports the progress they are making.
- The monitoring information the school collects reliably identifies trends in progress for pupils groups in English and mathematics. This information shows that current pupils make good progress in English and mathematics across the school.
- Pupils are well challenged, particularly those with below-average attainment. The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, are not always challenged to reach their full potential. This is particularly the case in mathematics.
- The quality of pupils writing across the curriculum has improved and is now good. Teachers do not always insist upon accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling in writing which limits the progress of pupils in some areas.
- Pupils make good progress in most subjects. This is supported by teachers' use of questioning to deepen thinking and reasoning. This extends pupils' learning further. In some subjects, questioning is less effective and therefore pupils do not make as much progress.

## School details

Unique reference number	116958
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10012401

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	9 to 13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	303
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Frank Fletcher
Executive headteacher	Mr Paul Essenhigh
Telephone number	01527872431
Website	<a href="http://www.catshill-middle.worcs.sch.uk">www.catshill-middle.worcs.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head@catshill-middle.worcs.sch.uk">head@catshill-middle.worcs.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Catshill is a smaller-than-average middle deemed secondary school.
- Almost all children are of White British heritage and most speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average.
- The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- No pupils in the school are currently being educated by any other provider.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics for pupils by the end of Year 6.



- The school runs a breakfast club.
- There is a hard federation between Catshill First School and Catshill Middle School. There is one governing body and one executive headteacher for the two schools.
- Catshill Middle School has a head of school and two assistant headteachers.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 33 lessons or parts of lessons.
- The inspectors met with pupils and heard a selection of pupils read. The inspectors looked at examples of pupils' work in their books and spoke to pupils about their learning. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime and lunchtime as well as in lessons. There were 80 responses to the online pupil questionnaire which were considered.
- Meetings were held with newly appointed teachers, senior leaders, subject coordinators and welfare staff. There were 38 responses to the staff online questionnaire which were taken into account.
- The lead inspector met with 5 governors, including the chair of the governing body, and spoke by telephone to a former school advisor.
- The opinions of parents were considered through 39 responses on Parent View, and conversations with parents before school. A letter and email received from parents were also reviewed.
- Various school documents were scrutinised, including the school's self-evaluation, development plans, information about managing teachers' performance and staff training records. Minutes of meetings of the governing body and information about pupils' progress, behaviour, attendance and safety were also analysed.

## Inspection team

Ann Pritchard, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Andrea Quigley	Ofsted Inspector
Rob Hackfath	Her Majesty's Inspector
Gwendoline Onyon	Ofsted Inspector

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