

Inspection of Brewood Middle CofE Academy

School Road, Brewood, Stafford, Staffordshire ST19 9DS

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 March 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The head of school of this school is Jon Smith. This school is part of St Chad's Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Sarah Cockshott, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Anthony Orlik. There is also an executive principal, Rod Dickson, who is responsible for this school and one other.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at Brewood Middle CofE Academy and many describe it as being like a 'family'. This means the pupils feel encouraged to achieve well, and they take advantage of the opportunities provided for them. Pupils benefit from the welcoming environment that the school provides and are supported well to learn to keep themselves safe.

The school is renewing its curriculum to ensure there is consistently high ambition across all subjects for all pupils. In most respects, the school has been successful in this, and pupils are learning and remembering more. The curriculum is enhanced by an impressive range of clubs and educational visits which pupils enjoy. These include bushcraft, cookery, games club, the ski trip and annual residential. Pupils benefit too from significant careers information throughout their time at Brewood.

Behaviour is of a high standard at Brewood Middle. This is because pupils understand the importance of treating each other with respect, and the school takes effective action to support them in this. Pupils appreciate the leadership opportunities which they have available to them, including the school council, student leadership team and house captains.

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

The school has reviewed its curriculum to ensure higher levels of consistency and ambition. This is now more secure, for example in English and mathematics. In these subjects, pupils are successfully learning and remembering more. This is because the key knowledge they need is clearly identified, and assessment supports teachers to identify and close gaps in pupils' understanding. However, in other subjects, the curriculum design is less effective as the key knowledge that pupils need to learn is less precisely defined, and there is less clarity around how this develops across the two key stages. This means that pupils' understanding is sometimes less effectively developed. The school has focused significantly on reading and ensuring that all pupils have the support they need to read fluently. Leaders have worked effectively to develop a love of reading.

The school has renewed its approach to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils have their needs accurately identified and there is more extensive liaison with parents and pupils with respect to future targets. Plans that accurately identify pupils' learning needs are shared with staff, and leaders monitor their use to ensure they are used effectively. This helps pupils with SEND to achieve well.

Pupils at Brewood Middle are explicitly taught the school's behaviour expectations. As a result, they are consistently polite and respectful to each other and towards visitors. Incidents of poor behaviour are very rare and handled appropriately to help pupils reflect on their choices. The school has a strategic approach to attendance

which has had a positive impact on overall attendance levels, especially for those pupils who are persistently absent.

Personal development at Brewood Middle has many strengths. The school has a substantial and well-established extra-curricular offer which is especially strong for sports provision and visits, both local and international. Leaders' analysis of attendance at extra-curricular clubs is becoming more focused on ensuring that more vulnerable pupils take advantage of the offer. The advice pupils receive about future careers is highly developed and effective. There are strong links with employers and local providers and the school is proud to have the 'Quality in Careers' standard. The pupils' understanding of other faiths and cultures is developed effectively through well-planned opportunities. The school uses 'Life' lessons to teach pupils about their personal, social, health and economic education.

Those responsible for governance are well informed about developments at Brewood Middle thanks to extensive liaison with leaders and external validation. They discharge their statutory responsibilities effectively. Trust employees are ambitious for the school and have secured support from other schools in the trust to help develop provision at Brewood. There remain inconsistencies in how leaders at all levels quality assure their areas of responsibility, especially around the curriculum. This means there remains variation between and within subjects. Leaders engage effectively with staff about workload. Staff report they are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the school has not ensured that there is clarity in the core knowledge that pupils should know and remember and the order in which it is taught to them. Consequently, some pupils do not build a secure depth of knowledge and understanding in these subjects. The school should ensure that it clearly defines and sequences the key content and concepts pupils need to know across both key stages in all subjects.
- There are inconsistencies in how well the curriculum is delivered in some subjects. This means that there is variation in how well pupils learn the intended curriculum. The school should ensure that its quality assurance and professional development supports all staff to deliver their curriculum as intended across all subjects.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	145176
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10294634
Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	9 to 13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	418
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Anthony Orlik
CEO of trust	Sarah Cockshott
Headteacher	Rod Dickson (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.brewood.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the St Chad’s Academies Trust.
- The school is part of the Church of England Diocese of Lichfield.
- The school’s most recent section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character was in February 2017.
- The school does not use any alternative provisions.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- Brewood Middle CofE Academy converted to become an academy in September 2019. When its predecessor school, Brewood Church of England Middle School, was last inspected, it was judged to be good overall.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education

Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- As a part of this inspection, the inspectors met with members of the local advisory board, the chair of the trust, employees of the trust, senior leaders, subject leaders, teaching staff as well as other employees in the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in: English, mathematics, geography, design technology and science. They also looked at examples of pupils' work in other subjects. For each deep dive, the inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors reviewed the school's extra-curricular activities, enrichment programme and their careers and personal development programmes with leaders and pupils.
- The inspectors reviewed the school's behaviour and attendance records with school leaders.
- The inspectors met with members of staff and spoke to pupils, both formally and informally, at various points in the inspection. They took account of responses to a staff survey, Ofsted Parent View and the free-text responses.

Inspection team

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