



Bredon Hill Middle School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116956
LEA Worcestershire
Inspection number 279962
Inspection dates 11 May 2006 to 12 May 2006
Reporting inspector Paul Sadler AI

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

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary	School address	Elmley Road
School category	Community		Ashton-under-hill
Age range of pupils	10 to 13		Evesham, Worcestershire WR11 7SW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01386 881426
Number on roll	456	Fax number	01386 881915
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Adrian Hardman
Date of previous inspection	29 November 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Ann Wylie

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is situated in the small village of Ashton-under-Hill which is located about five miles south of Evesham. It serves a number of villages in the area and about four-fifths of the pupils travel to and from school by bus.

The area is generally one of economic advantage, although there are pockets of relative deprivation. The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals is well below average. The proportions with learning difficulties and with statements of special educational need are below average. There are very few pupils of minority ethnic heritage and none speak a language other than English at home.

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 with some outstanding features, which gives good value for money. Pupils make good progress and achieve above average standards by the time they leave at the end of Year 8. Their personal development and well-being are excellent and lead to very good behaviour and attendance. Pupils are involved in making decisions, for instance through the school council. As an 11 year old said at the end of his first year in the school, 'that was the best school year I've ever had'. The curriculum is outstanding and features a wide range of international links and excellent opportunities to participate in sport. Teaching is good and pupils with learning difficulties are particularly well supported. The care, guidance and support pupils are given is outstanding; a particular feature is the extent to which pupils know about their progress when compared with national standards and what they need to do in order to improve their work.

Leadership and management are good and the school has made good improvements since the last inspection. Although many senior managers are currently in an acting capacity, they have the potential to continue to improve the school. They have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, generally agreeing with inspectors' judgements but underestimating the quality of the curriculum and of pupils' personal development and well-being. Although the school has made good progress in gathering data in order to assess its strengths and weaknesses, this is not used to best effect in assessing pupils' overall progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop ways of using data more effectively to measure the progress pupils have made when they leave at the end of Year 8.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress and reach standards that are above average for their age. They enter the school with above average standards and at the end of Year 6 reach above average standards in English and science, and average standards in mathematics. In Years 7 and 8 good progress is made in all three subjects and by the end of Year 8, judged by internal tests, most pupils are working at or above the expected standards for those who are a year older. This is confirmed by test results received from the high school. In lessons, Year 7 pupils could identify gases emitted by chemical reactions and the heat changes involved. In English, Year 7 pupils are able to provide sophisticated interpretations of the messages intended by the director of a film without words. In Year 6 mathematics, pupils could find the equation of a straight line graph.

All pupils speak with maturity and confidence. This was clear in a number of subjects, for example in Year 8 drama where pupils could comment sensibly and in detail on the quality of each other's work. All pupils make equally good progress in relation to their

abilities, for instance lower attaining Year 8 pupils can describe reasons for their interpretations of a character's personality in a novel.

Pupils are set challenging targets which they usually achieve. They are familiar with these and know what they need to do to achieve them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being is reflected in their enthusiastic enjoyment of school life and their exceptionally good rates of attendance. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils develop a strong sense of community with large numbers undertaking posts of responsibilities of many kinds. These include prefects and elected members of the school council. Pupils speak well of the role of the school council. It has been involved with surveys on bullying and the subsequent rewriting of the anti-bullying policy. Close partnerships with schools in other parts of the world, including the Gambia, and other opportunities to study different cultures further enrich pupils' experiences. Overall, attitudes to learning and behaviour are excellent. Pupils get on extremely well with each other and with adults, with a real bond of mutual respect. Pupils' personal development is enormously enhanced by their very extensive participation in a very wide range of additional activities. These include large scale events such as 'Rock Ballet' as well as clubs, visits and 'clinics' to reinforce work in a number of subjects. Very large numbers take part in sporting activities which make very important contributions to their social development and personal fitness. Pupils feel safe and appreciated, and most are choosing to adopt healthy lifestyles. Pupils are acquiring skills for their future economic well-being because they take real responsibility for their own learning by working well in teams and groups.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan lessons well and use a range of approaches to stimulate pupils to learn. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well as a teaching resource. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils are capable of and use questioning very well. There are good relationships between teachers and pupils. Teaching assistants are used effectively, especially when supporting those with learning difficulties. When teaching is less good this is sometimes because insufficient time is given for the activity and pupils rush their work or leave it incomplete. Pupils have good learning skills. They collaborate well, help each other, and use techniques learned in a range of subjects.

Marking is generally used well to help pupils improve their work, for instance in English. In some subjects marking is less rigorous and is restricted to ticks and crosses, making it more difficult for pupils to know what to do next.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. It meets statutory requirements, and the issues raised at the last inspection have been addressed fully. Good organisation ensures that the needs of all pupils are met. There is very good support for pupils with learning difficulties. The provision for literacy, numeracy and ICT is well planned.

Links between subjects are strong. For example a topic on producing an animated sequence in ICT was designed in art, the story written in English lessons, and planned to incorporate words in French.

There are highly effective partnerships with local first schools and the local high school, which promote very good continuity in a variety of subjects. Teachers from the high school provide Spanish and German lessons for Year 8 pupils. The school is rightly proud of its extensive international educational and charity links with a variety of countries which include Hungary, East Germany, Holland and Belarus.

The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities provided across all subjects and which are very popular with pupils. Sporting opportunities are a particular strength.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The outstanding provision for pupils' care, guidance and support starts before pupils join the school with excellent processes to ensure a smooth transition from first schools. The pupil-friendly 'Guide to Bredon Hill Middle School' is a model of good practice. Pupils say that they feel confident to talk to a teacher or other adult if they need help. The role of teaching assistants is particularly effective in supporting pupils both in their lessons and for other difficulties they may encounter. Vulnerable children and families are very well supported through the school's exemplary involvement of outside agencies. Arrangements for the safety of pupils are nearly always very effective. These include the extremely well organised and supervised departure of pupils by bus. Child protection procedures are fully in place. Pupils believe that unacceptable incidents, including cases of bullying, are dealt with well. They also value the systems of rewards and sanctions, particularly their emphasis on incentives. Checks to ensure that pupils reach their full potential are extensive and effective and they know how to improve their work and how it compares with national standards. However, the role of the form tutor in tracking each pupil's overall progress is not yet as strong as other aspects of guidance and support.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The school's ethos promotes high standards of work and behaviour, which are reflected in pupils' attitudes, and a sense of community reflected in its international status and the range of responsibilities given

to pupils. The school has an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses, for instance in teaching and learning. Parents and pupils are consulted about the school's priorities, for instance through the school council, and this influences developments. An excellent newsletter gives regular updates on pupils' achievements. As a result, parents are generally very supportive, for example one said 'the staff have been brilliant in working with us to help our son'. The school's success in promoting internationalism is valued by many parents and pupils. The school has developed effective plans, for instance to implement the children's services agenda and the new structure for teachers' responsibilities.

Issues raised at the last inspection have been tackled well and improvement has been good. The use of data is satisfactory and improving but in some cases this data is not yet used as effectively as it might be, for instance to identify the overall progress that pupils make. At the time of the inspection most senior leaders held their posts in an acting capacity. Nevertheless, the capacity exists to promote further improvement. Governors are knowledgeable and effective; they support the school well.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

The inspectors who visited your school very much enjoyed talking and listening to you and seeing your work. We want to thank you for spending the time to do this. This letter is to tell you what we thought of your school and how it can be even better.

We think your school is a good school with some outstanding features. The best things about the school are:

You are taught well and make good progress in your work.

We particularly enjoyed the intelligent discussions you had in a good number of the lessons we saw.

Your teachers are very good at telling you how to improve your work.

All the adults at the school take good care of you.

Your behaviour is excellent and you work well together.

You enjoy school because there are lots of interesting things to do, both in lessons and at lunchtime.

The school's links with other countries help you to understand how other people live.

The school council is a good forum to discuss your ideas and worries.

To improve the school further, we have asked your teachers to use the information they have to find out how much progress you have made when you leave at the end of Year 8.