

Bromsgrove, Catshill First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116658
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	326424
Inspection date	10 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Arnalena (Nina) Bee

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	220
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Neil Bennett
Headteacher	Melanie Henderson
Date of previous school inspection	2 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Gibb Lane Catshill Bromsgrove B61 0JP
Telephone number	01527 872913
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Age group	3–9
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school including the Early Years Foundation Stage provision (EYFS) and investigated three main issues:

the quality of teaching and learning in reading, writing and mathematics, in all year groups

the usefulness of academic guidance

the involvement of senior leaders and core coordinators in raising achievement and standards in their areas of responsibility.

Evidence was gathered from observing pupils from Nursery to Year 6 at work and at play, discussions with staff, pupils and governors, scrutiny of pupils' work, and analysis of systems used to track pupils' progress and monitor the quality of teaching, school documentation and responses to parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the work of the school were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Catshill First School is average in size. Almost all pupils come from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The school provides for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in a Nursery and Reception class. The on-site childcare provision, The Den, a before and after school club, is managed by an external provider.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This very happy, welcoming school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of everything the school does. One parent represented the views of many when she wrote, 'My children thrive at school and enjoy each day. They have excellent relationships with their teachers and are friends with the whole school.' Pupils in Year 2 spoke enthusiastically about their enjoyment of school. A number of them said, 'Learning is fun and important because it makes you clever.' Pupils attend regularly and attendance is satisfactory. Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and robust and parents are confident that their children are well looked after. The care and pastoral support that pupils receive is good. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very sensitively supported by all staff. As one parent said, 'Pupils' individual needs are very well catered for because all staff are caring and flexible.' Pupils get on well with each other and their behaviour is good. From an early age, they begin to develop a good awareness of different cultures and beliefs. Pupils, in Year 2, spoke maturely about Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism. They are respectful of others, polite and listen attentively while others speak. The jobs pupils are given in and around school are taken very seriously and pupils are keen to help others who are not as fortunate as themselves. They spoke enthusiastically of how the school council instigated the knitting of hats for babies in Africa and the reason for doing this. Although pupils develop good personal and social skills, their satisfactory literacy and numeracy skills by the end of Year 4 means they are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education. Standards at the end of Year 4 are broadly average and achievement is satisfactory overall. Children get off to a good start in the EYFS and they achieve well. This good achievement continues through Years 1 and 2. At the end of Year 2, in 2008, standards were above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. This shows good improvement from 2007. In Years 3 and 4, progress is not as rapid. Assessment information, for the Year 4 pupils, who left in the summer term, shows that not all pupils made the progress that was expected of them, especially in mathematics. This is now improving and teachers have received extra training in this subject. In addition, the tracking of pupils' progress has improved and progress is now checked more regularly. All staff are involved in making sure pupils are on course to reach their predicted targets, and if not, additional support is given. Currently, in Years 3 and 4, pupils are making satisfactory progress in English and mathematics. The personal, social and health education programme is a strength of the satisfactory curriculum. It enables pupils to develop a good awareness of the need to live a healthy lifestyle and keep themselves safe. Pupils know why they should eat a balanced diet and take regular exercise. The Life Education caravan is a particular favourite of the pupils. They say it is fun and enables them to learn such a lot about their bodies. The good range of out of school clubs, including many sporting activities, promote the need to take regular exercise and are enjoyed by many pupils. Visits successfully promote and reinforce learning in several curriculum areas. Many of these are a result of good links with the church, local schools and with people who work in the local community. The school's contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory. Although positive interactions between learners and staff are successfully encouraged, the quality of teaching and the curriculum does not enable all pupils to achieve as well as they should. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In Years 1 and 2 where it is good, pupils know what they are going to learn because teachers make it clear what is expected of them. Expectations are high in relation to completing tasks and presenting work neatly. Lessons run at a swift pace and all abilities are generally catered for. In all classes, relationships are good and information and communication technology is used well to support

learning in many lessons. Classes are generally well resourced and teaching assistants effectively contribute to the learning in lessons. Occasionally, activities are not well matched to the different abilities within the classes because teachers do not use assessment information accurately when they plan their lessons. In Years 3 and 4, teachers' planning does not always ensure that higher attaining pupils are sufficiently challenged, especially in mathematics and writing. Expectations in relation to the presentation of work are sometimes too low. Much of the teachers' marking is good and informs pupils what they need to do to improve. However, this varies from class to class and subject to subject. Lower attaining pupils in all classes occasionally need more guidance. Most pupils have a good idea of their literacy and numeracy targets and say they help them to improve. The best marking refers to these targets and shows the pupils how near they are to reaching them. The headteacher provides good leadership and has a clear idea of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. She values the work of all adults and this results in everyone working well together as a team. The role of the senior leaders and core coordinators is developing but this has been hindered through staff absences. Also, some core subject coordinators have only recently been appointed. Their monitoring role, as well as that of the coordinator for special educational needs, is not yet effective enough to bring about the necessary change to raise achievement, particularly in writing and mathematics in Years 3 and 4. The recently improved system for tracking pupils' progress has yet to fully influence pupils' standards. The monitoring of teaching is not rigorous enough and so weaknesses in teaching remain. Nevertheless, the school has made good progress in relation to the issues they were left with during the previous inspection. Governors are fully involved in the work of the school and so they are able to support and challenge the school well. These successes show that the school's capacity to improve further is satisfactory.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Teaching is good. Parents are pleased with how well their children learn. They say that children who need additional help are well supported and that higher attaining children are effectively challenged. They are right and as a result, children learn well. No opportunities are missed to promote the need to get along with each other and the importance of listening when adults and other children are talking. Behaviour is good as children play and work alongside each other. Children in the Nursery were seen playing, with great enjoyment, in their secure outside area. They spoke wisely about road safety as they rode bikes safely, stopping sensibly at the zebra crossing when someone wanted to cross the road. Reception children were well supported by adults and worked hard as they developed their understanding of letter sounds and blends. Occasionally, as children start to write, there is too little emphasis on the need to write letters correctly, especially when they write their own names. Levels of attainment on entry to school are below those expected for their ages, particularly in the development of speech and language skills and mathematical skills. Children make good progress and, by the time they start in Year 1, children are above average in most areas, apart from some elements of reading, writing and mathematics. There are good arrangements to ensure health and safety and children's personal development. For example, from the earliest age, they are encouraged to have a go at putting on their coats and doing them up when the weather is cold, while adults are always at hand to give appropriate support when necessary. A well-planned curriculum enables children to experience a good balance between adult-led activities and those that they choose themselves. Adults effectively plan and organise each day so that sessions run smoothly. The EYFS is well led and managed. All adults who work in the Nursery and Reception classes have a good understanding of how young children learn.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching in Years 3 and 4 so that higher attaining pupils are consistently challenged, especially in mathematics and writing, and teachers develop higher expectations regarding the presentation of pupils' work.
- Develop the role of the core subject coordinators and the special educational needs co-ordinator so monitoring is focused sharply on improving achievement.

A small proportion of schools whose effectiveness is judged as satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit from an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

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

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

11 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Catshill First School, Bromsgrove, B61 0JP

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit you. We especially enjoyed talking to you about how you are getting on. It was nice to see Years 3 and 4 pupils having good fun as they worked with members of their families in the Fabric Painting Workshop, in the hall. We think you behave well and know you enjoy coming to school because you told us.

These are the main things we found out about your school.

- You are all well looked after and cared for while in school and those who look after you at home agree.
- You learn well in the Nursery, Reception and in Years 1 and 2 because you are taught well.
- You are lucky to have such a good range of out of school activities to take part in.
- Teachers plan many exciting visits and other activities, such as the Life Education Caravan, that make your learning even more fun.
- You know lots about keeping yourselves safe, eating healthily, and why you should take regular exercise.
- You are kind and considerate and know that some people are not as fortunate as yourselves, so you raise money to help them.
- By the time you leave, in Year 4, you reach standards that are similar to most other pupils.

We have asked the school to do three things to improve the education you receive:

- keep a more careful eye on teaching and learning in the classroom, so that staff can show each other how to help you make more progress
- check that all pupils, in Years 3 and 4, are given activities that are challenging and not too easy for them, especially in writing and mathematics
- make sure that the leaders and managers carefully check the work you do in your books to make sure you are all learning as well as you can.

Keep smiling, working hard and having fun as you learn.

Best wishes

Nina Bee Lead inspector