

# Bromsgrove Charford First School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116659
<b>Local Authority</b>	Worcestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	338855
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 September 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Susan Walsh

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	407
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Terry O Reilly
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jenny Bottrill
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 February 2007
<b>School address</b>	Charford Road Charford Bromsgrove
<b>Telephone number</b>	01527 873778
<b>Fax number</b>	01527 878984
<b>Email address</b>	office@charford.worcs.sch.uk

---

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2009

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 17 lessons or parts of lessons, and held meetings with staff, governors and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's documentation including records about pupils' progress and behaviour, the school's monitoring of teaching and case studies of support for vulnerable students. Inspectors considered the outcomes of 121 parental, 11 staff and 100 pupil questionnaires. The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

the impact of improved provision and new leadership and management on boosting progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage

- whether teaching is sufficiently challenging and work is well matched to pupils' needs in mathematics lessons in Key Stage 2
- pupils' awareness of cultural diversity and the schools' contribution to the wider community in the United Kingdom.

## Information about the school

Charford First School is much larger than most first schools. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals varies from year to year but can be above average and a significant number of pupils come from less advantaged backgrounds. The vast majority are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The Early Years Foundation Stage is provided for through morning and afternoon Nursery sessions and three Reception classes. Children were just joining the Nursery and Reception classes at the time of the inspection.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Charford First School is a good school where pupils are exceptionally well cared for. Parents accurately describe the wonderful atmosphere in school, a typical comment being that it's 'safe, friendly and exciting.' Pupils are understandably proud of and very committed to their school. They enthusiastically embrace and enjoy the good range of opportunities it offers. They have a very strong voice in decision-making in the school through the school council and the eco committee and contribute well to local events. The school council has been central to ensuring that there is a good choice of healthy meals at lunchtime. The tasty food is very much appreciated by pupils and this together with their extensive participation in and enjoyment of sporting activities demonstrates their excellent understanding of how to keep healthy. The excellent relationship between the school and the high school successfully extends the range of opportunities for pupils. Provision for the arts continues to be outstanding. Both pupils and parents alike appreciate the extensive range of extra curricular opportunities including clubs, visits and visitors.

When children first join the school many have skills below those expected nationally. They get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and continue to make good progress in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. By the time they reach the end of Year 4 they are achieving standards that are above average especially in their reading and their writing. The rigorous checking of both standards and progress by senior leaders ensures that pupils who are in danger of falling behind are identified very quickly and are able to access extra help. Consequently all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress. The support for vulnerable pupils is outstanding and enhanced by very close cooperation with a wide range of external agencies. Excellent provision within the Sparklers nurture group enables pupils with emotional and other difficulties to cope in the mainstream situation.

Most teaching is good and occasionally it is outstanding. Staff have high aspirations for their pupils. Activities are carefully planned, take into account pupils' abilities and previous learning and usually build in a good level of challenge. Most teachers use questioning well but occasionally some teachers do not check whether pupils' thoroughly understand what has been taught in lessons. Pupils do not always know what to do to improve their work because target setting and teachers' marking is of variable quality.

Good leadership and management have ensured that the school has gone from strength to strength since the previous inspection and standards are rising. Where staff have taken on new responsibilities they have risen to the challenge. All this demonstrates the school's good capacity for further improvement.

**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

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

- Improve teaching further so that more is outstanding, by:
- ensuring that all teachers regularly check pupils' understanding in lessons.
- improving the use of academic targets and the quality of teachers' marking.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

Although children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, they sometimes join Year 1 with skills that are below those typical of five-year-olds in key areas such as language and communication and mathematical development. Pupils make good progress through Key Stage 1. Over the past three years standards in reading and mathematics have been average at the end of Year 2. Standards in reading dipped in 2008 but quickly recovered as the school took timely and effective action. Pupils continue to do well in Key Stage 2 and over the last three years have consistently reached above average standards in reading and writing with an above average proportion reaching the higher level, particularly in writing. Standards in mathematics are rapidly improving and in 2009 an above average proportion of pupils reached the expected standards in mathematics at the end of Year 4. The school is aware that there is the potential for more pupils to reach the higher level in mathematics. The school's strong commitment to equal opportunities is reflected in the way that barriers to learning are dismantled, allowing all groups of pupils to make good progress.

Pupils enjoy their school work and are keen to do well. They make an outstanding contribution to the school community and are always keen to help. There is a good emphasis on developing pupils' self esteem which is increasing their confidence. Many pupils enter the school with under-developed social skills but they learn to cooperate, to respect others and to take responsibility for their actions. By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 4 they are sensible and mature and a credit to the school. Behaviour is good both in and out of lessons. Although there are occasional fallings out, the school carefully investigates these and pupils are confident that any concerns they have are taken seriously. Consequently they feel safe in school. They are well informed about how to keep themselves out of harm's way. Although attendance rates remain average they are improving and there are relatively few persistent non-attenders. Pupils' good basic skills, combined with increased levels of self-belief and a good work ethic, means that pupils are well placed for future success.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

---

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

**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

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

**How effective is the provision?**

Good teaching is leading to good progress and above average standards, and is helping to ensure that pupils enjoy their lessons. A good range of activities and teaching styles results in pupils being well motivated and hard working. Resources that are applicable to pupils' everyday lives are often used to support learning, making lessons relevant and interesting. Many teachers are proficient at questioning pupils and developing their thinking. Occasionally questioning and other methods are not used as well as they might be to check pupils' understanding. Teachers are provided with very good quality information about the attainment and progress of pupils in their class and this is used well to plan work that matches pupils' needs and is sufficiently challenging, including in mathematics lessons. This data is also used very effectively to pinpoint pupils who are danger of falling behind. Extra help is given often by teaching assistants who do a sterling job patiently supporting not only those pupils who find learning difficult but also those who occasionally just need a little bit of extra help. Academic targets and teacher's marking do not always provide pupils with sufficient guidance about how to improve their work.

The broad, balanced and creative curriculum effectively promotes pupils' good achievement and develops their personal qualities. It is particularly effective at meeting the requirements of pupils with additional learning needs. The profile of reading has been raised and the importance of books is stressed. They are frequently celebrated and always valued. This approach, together with the successful application of a programme that encourages pupils to link sounds and letters, has led to improved standards in reading especially at the end of Key Stage 1. The curriculum for mathematics has also

**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

been enhanced through the introduction of more consistent techniques for calculation and a more rigorous approach to problem solving. This has helped to accelerate the progress of pupils in mathematics particularly in Key Stage 2. An excellent variety of extra-curricular activities, including a very wide range of clubs, are greatly appreciated by both pupils and parents because they help make learning fun.

The school provides a very attractive, stimulating and welcoming environment. Pupils are well known to staff and are valued as individuals. The specific care and guidance provided for vulnerable pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, is excellent. This allows these pupils to make the very best of the opportunities that are available. Transition arrangements are good particularly those for pupils who might find moving to middle school difficult. Robust monitoring of attendance has led to improvements in attendance rates.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b> Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	<b>2</b>
	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Senior leaders and governors are very successful in ensuring that staff have consistently high expectations of pupils and they work extremely well as a team. In particular the headteacher ensures that respect for and valuing others is central to the school's ethos. Safeguarding procedures are robust. The school promotes community cohesion well. Pupils' understanding of the school and its immediate community is very good but there are some gaps in their opportunities to learn with children from different backgrounds in the wider community. The school monitors its work well through robust analysis of data and regular checking of the quality of teaching. Although senior and middle managers do a good job, their obvious skills have not yet been fully utilised because they are only just starting to be involved in the direct observation of lessons. The school works exceptionally well with a wide range of partners and communication with parents is good.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b> Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	<b>2</b>
	2

<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b> Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get off to a super start in the Nursery because of the expertise of the staff and the very effective use of the good facilities. This good start is built upon in the Reception classes and children make good progress as they move through the Early Years Foundation Stage. Parents are delighted with the induction procedures. Children who join the Nursery and Reception classes settle in very quickly as a consequence of the safe, secure and very welcoming environment. Staff immediately set to work to improve children's language skills and their social skills by asking them challenging questions about the exciting and interesting activities that have been provided. Children's welfare needs are carefully attended to. Rigorous assessment procedures are used to measure children's progress and plan activities that move their learning on. Children who are finding learning difficult are quickly identified and effectively supported. Leadership and management are good. Staff are very enthusiastic. They are brimming over with good ideas about how the provision can be improved further. Although there is a detailed action plan it still has to be fine tuned to meet the needs of the current group of pupils.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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 great majority of the parents who responded to the questionnaire are very happy



**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

with the school and what it does for their children. Very many commented on their children's enjoyment of school, the supportive and approachable teachers, and the hard work and commitment of the teaching assistants. Many parents commented positively on the wide range of extra-curricular activities. A very small number of parents would like to be informed more quickly when their children are having difficulties with their work or receiving extra help. A handful of parents had some concerns about bullying. Inspectors looked carefully into this matter and found that the school keeps comprehensive records of the prompt actions that have been taken when concerns have been reported by parents or pupils. Pupils were confident that bullying is rare.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Charford 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 121 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 407 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	89	74	29	24	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	93	77	27	22	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	50	41	67	55	4	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	55	45	63	52	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	73	60	48	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	58	48	59	49	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	65	54	54	45	1	1	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)	60	50	56	46	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	60	50	56	46	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	59	49	52	43	3	2	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	53	44	59	49	4	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	81	67	37	31	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	65	54	54	45	2	2	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 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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



19 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Charford First School, Bromsgrove, B60 3NH

It was a delight and a privilege to visit your school. The inspection team really enjoyed talking to you all and listened very carefully to what you had to say. You go to a good school that has some outstanding features. It's clear that you have a good time at school because of all the fun things you get to do. You told us that you have lots of clubs and other extra activities.

We enjoyed listening to you talk about the good work done by the ECO committee and the school council, who have done some great work on developing the quality of your school meals. We agree your meals are very healthy and tasty. We thought you were very well informed about how to keep healthy and safe and were very impressed by your lovely art work. Your behaviour is good. You have good manners and make visitors very welcome indeed. We think that you all make a really important contribution to your school.

Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes and older children also told us that they find learning fun. You are all making good progress and by the end of Year 4 you are reaching standards that are above those reached by other children in schools nationally. Your teachers work very hard and teaching is good. We have asked your teachers to make sure they always check your understanding in all lessons. We have also asked them to improve the way they mark your books and use targets so you know exactly how to improve your work. You told us that the staff look after you very well indeed and we agree.

The people who run your school are working very hard to make it a better place. I wish you well for the future.

Yours faithfully

Susan Walsh

Lead inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**