

# Brewood CofE (C) Middle School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	124452
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	380900
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 January 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Frank Knowles

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Middle deemed secondary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	9–13
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	362
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Doreen Ellis
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Swift (Executive Headteacher)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 June 2009
<b>School address</b>	School Road Brewood Stafford ST19 9DS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01902 850266
<b>Fax number</b>	01902 851332
<b>Email address</b>	office@brewood.staffs.sch.uk

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## Introduction

Inspection team

Frank Knowles

Additional inspector

Patrick Cook

Additional inspector

Dorothy Bond

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed teaching in 22 lessons taught by 18 teachers, some observed jointly with senior staff, and one led by a teaching assistant. Inspectors held discussions with staff, members of the governing body and three groups of pupils, and heard pupils in all year groups read. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books and other work, the school's behaviour, exclusion and attendance records, a range of policies and the analysis of pupils' assessment data. Inspectors took account of the responses to questionnaires from 129 parents and carers, 85 pupils and 15 staff.

## Information about the school

Brewood Church of England Middle School is smaller than the average secondary school. It serves the villages of Brewood, Bishopswood, Coven and Wheaton Aston and the surrounding rural area, but also draws some pupils from the fringes of Cannock and Wolverhampton. The very large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language and none is at the early stages of learning English. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average, as is the percentage of pupils who have special educational needs or are disabled.

The school formed a federation with St Mary's Church of England First School, Wheaton Aston, in April 2011. The two schools share a governing body and the headteacher is executive headteacher of both schools.

The school met the current floor standard set by the government, which determines the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. It has gained the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Bronze Eco Award, and has achieved Investors in People and Dyslexia Friendly status. It is also a member of the Comenius Project that links schools in Europe. Brewood has specialist status in science and mathematics.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good school. It has a very positive ethos of high expectations in pupils' work and their personal development. It provides a high-quality learning environment and makes very good use of its resources.
- Support for the school from parents and carers is very strong, particularly in the way it helps transition from pupils' first schools. Staff and pupils are also overwhelmingly positive in their appreciation of the school.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well. They are on target to achieve above-average results at the end of Year 8, although their writing is not as strong as their reading, mathematics and science. This means that, good though it is, pupils' achievement is not as high as it could be.
- The school provides an exciting curriculum for all pupils, both in lessons and through a wide range of enrichment activities such as theme days and residential experiences.
- Pupils learn well because teaching is good overall, and some is outstanding. Teachers plan well-structured and challenging lessons and pupils engage enthusiastically in group activities. However, too few pupils know what level they are working at and what their targets are.
- The school's support for pupils with special educational needs is very thorough and well organised. Given their starting points, these pupils make better than average progress.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and they show high levels of personal responsibility in class and around the school. They feel safe at school and say that rare cases of bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively.
- The school is well led at all levels, with a shared drive for improvement among

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staff and the governing body. The school rightly focuses on raising achievement, but its use of assessment data is not rigorous enough to support this aim.

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

- Translate the school's high expectations of its pupils into better progress by:
  - ensuring all pupils know their current levels of attainment and their end-of-year targets, and the criteria used to assess their work
  - consistently and rigorously using marking and reviews of pupils' progress to communicate what pupils need to do to improve their work and reach their targets.
  
- Increase the rigour of the analysis and coordination of assessment data by:
  - raising the school's numerical targets for pupils' progress to match its high expectations of pupils
  - providing a clearer analysis of termly and annual progress in all subjects to enable early action to be taken when a group of students is at risk of falling behind.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils engage readily in classroom activities and make generally good gains in knowledge and skills during lessons. Pupils' work shows good progress during the school year, too. Almost all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire felt that their children were making good progress, and that the school helped their children develop skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics. From starting points in Year 5, assessed by the school to be slightly below average, pupils reach average attainment at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics, with those known to be eligible for free school meals achieving particularly well. Pupils' current assessments indicate that in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science they will reach above average levels by the end of Year 8. Particularly good progress in science reflects the school's commitment to developing its specialist area. Pupils' progress in writing, while satisfactory, does not match their good progress in reading, mathematics and science, although their handwriting skills are generally good. The school has recognised this and its work to raise standards in boys' writing has already shown improvement, for example when pupils in Year 6 enthusiastically wrote news bulletins about an escaped lion.

The school's support strategies for pupils with special educational needs focus strongly on maximising achievement, and expectations of progress for these pupils are the same as for other pupils. They receive well-focused support through smaller classes in English and mathematics with additional staffing and well-planned individual support from teaching assistants, who mark their workbooks very

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thoroughly. These indicate that nearly all make good or better progress. Support for reading focuses both on breaking down words systematically to sound them out phonically and on understanding. Support for average- and lower-attaining pupils, identified as a need from a dip in test results at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2011, has improved progress in mathematics for these pupils, too.

The school's numerical targets for pupils' progress do not match the high expectations staff have of pupils or the progress seen in lessons. This means the school is not able to use its analysis of assessment data effectively enough to identify potential underperformance.

### **Quality of teaching**

Teaching is well planned and provides pupils with challenging activities that extend their thinking. Almost all parents and carers responding to the questionnaire appreciated the good quality of the teaching their children receive. Teachers communicate learning objectives clearly at the beginning of lessons. They often provide modified resources to ensure all pupils, especially those with special educational needs, can engage fully with the task, particularly in mixed-ability classes. Pupils enjoy lessons and participate readily. In a history lesson, for example, good use of questioning meant that pupils contributed confidently to a discussion about what motivated people to join the crusades. Their full engagement meant that they were developing a good understanding of religious conflict and of the world's cultural and ethnic diversity in the context of history.

Lessons are well structured to maintain a good pace. Pupils engage enthusiastically and responsibly in paired and group work. They often mark each other's work, but this rarely focuses on the assessment criteria that determine what level of attainment that piece of work represents. In a dance lesson, however, pupils used assessment criteria very effectively to evaluate each other's performance and give constructive feedback. Some marking seen in pupils' books was excellent, with a very clear assessment of quality and comments on how pupils could improve their work, but this is not consistent. The school's insistence that pupils respond in writing to the short-term learning goals suggested during marking has given pupils a greater sense of responsibility for their work. Reviews of work, marking and self-evaluation, however, are generally not supported by pupils knowing their current levels of attainment and their end-of year targets. As a result, pupils do not have all the information they need to improve their work.

Teaching promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. It consistently promotes the ethos of the school and encourages pupils to take personal responsibility. The extensive use of group work supports their social development. Spiritual and cultural dimensions are successfully represented in the work done in tutor groups, but are not always brought out as purposefully in subject lessons. The school is working to enhance the teaching of reading, writing, communication and mathematics through cross-curricular approaches. Examples of word lists, writing frames, numeracy and theme-based approaches in several subjects indicated a

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secure start in this area.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

The school provides a calm and visually stimulating learning environment and pupils' behaviour is good. Almost all parents and carers, and the very large majority of pupils, held this view, too. Pupils are punctual to school and to lessons and attendance is above average. They are considerate to each other and courteous in their dealings with adults. In lessons, pupils start working promptly, and teachers' good classroom management means there is rarely any disruption to learning. Movement between lessons is very orderly and well organised, with a high presence of adults around the school. Behaviour is similarly good during breaks and lunchtimes. Pupils recognised that a very small number sometimes behaved badly, both around the school and in lessons. In discussions, they recognised that staff deal with these incidents well.

The school's incident records show a similar picture of good behaviour, with very little bullying and minimal use of exclusion from school. In discussions, pupils expressed confidence that any rare cases of bullying would be dealt with very swiftly and effectively if they went to their teacher. The school has dealt very successfully with a small number of pupils with significant behavioural difficulties, maintaining their attendance with minimal disruption to the learning of others.

All parents and carers responding to the questionnaire felt their children were safe at school, and this view was reflected by almost all of the pupils responding. Pupils are very aware of the risks associated with internet use, what they should do to avoid them and what the school does through internet filters to protect them. Pupils value the recently introduced rewards policy. One parent who had attended a 'celebration assembly' to watch the awards commented, '. . . it was an excellent, positive and heartfelt message to give to these young people and [I] feel privileged to have attended the event.'

## **Leadership and management**

The executive headteacher, senior staff and governors lead the school well. Leaders at all levels have a shared ambition to improve the school and to enable all pupils to reach their potential. The school's systems and approaches support this ambition well. Members of the governing body hold the school to account well, especially over its use of resources. Arrangements for ensuring the safety of pupils are good and all staff are fully trained. Staff promote equality very effectively and the school tackles any form of discrimination robustly. The school's curriculum is outstanding because it provides a very broad, balanced and exciting range of activities with strong focuses on pupils' subject knowledge and skills and on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It continues to evolve, with enrichment through theme days and residential experiences contributing significantly to pupils' learning, enjoyment and personal development. The school's self-evaluation is generally accurate and identifies clear areas for improvement, although it does not always focus sufficiently

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on the impact of initiatives on pupils' attainment and progress. The two schools in the federation work closely together. Detailed cross-federation development plans, reviewed regularly, provide a good vehicle for the involvement of all staff, who develop specific action plans that contribute to whole-school development areas and improvements in their own subject.

The school does not make enough use of assessment data to identify where groups of pupils might be falling behind. One reason for this is that assessment data is not coordinated well enough or analysed in sufficient depth to enable senior staff to identify these groups at an early enough stage in the year. Staff are very effective in using pupils' assessment data to identify where intervention is needed with individual pupils, but the school is less effective when considering aggregate data and groups of pupils.

The school's drive to raise standards since the last inspection has included professional development that has brought about more consistent teaching and more active learning by pupils. More recently, the work done to support boys' writing and the introduction of the rewards system have been very effective, and subject leaders have become centrally involved in the leadership of the school. These improvements and a very strong commitment to moving the school forward from all staff indicate the school has good capacity to bring about further improvements.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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 January 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Brewood CofE (C) Middle School, Stafford, ST19 9DS**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you in lessons and around the school. We particularly valued the discussions we had with some of you in groups because they helped us to understand your school well. It was good to hear some of you reading and talking about your reading books.

You go to a good school, where you make good progress and achieve well. Your lessons are interesting and you join in with the activities enthusiastically. You work very well in groups, too. Many of you are good at assessing your own and each other's work, and we have suggested that you should use assessment criteria in more subjects so you can all do this well. The way you respond to the targets many teachers set when they mark your books is good, and helps you improve your work. We have asked the headteacher and staff to make sure you all know what level you are working at and your end-of-year targets to help you with this.

It was good to hear that you feel safe at school, and that you think behaviour is good. We agree about this, and we were pleased to hear from you that staff dealt quickly with any bullying that happened. There is a very calm atmosphere in the school, especially in lessons. You showed us how courteous you are and how you become responsible young people by the time you reach Year 8.

The executive headteacher, senior staff and governors lead the school well. They are very committed to improving the school further, and to help we have asked them to make more use of the information they have about how well you are doing.

We hope you will continue to work hard, especially in writing, and always try hard to reach your potential. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Frank Knowles  
Lead inspector

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