



Bromsgrove, Sidemoor First School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116664
Local Authority Worcestershire
Inspection number 290584
Inspection dates 23–24 January 2007
Reporting inspector Andrew Watters HMI

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

Type of school	First	School address	Broad Street
School category	Community		Bromsgrove
Age range of pupils	4–11		B61 8LW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01527 872271
Number on roll (school)	234	Fax number	01527 837459
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Chris Platt
		Headteacher	Catherine Shearwood
Date of previous school inspection	2 December 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is situated in a mainly residential area of Bromsgrove. The social and economic context of its pupils is average, being neither significantly advantaged nor disadvantaged. The great majority of pupils are of White British origin and live locally, either in privately owned or local authority housing. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals and of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are both below the national average. Since September 2005 there has been a 50% turnover of teaching staff. The headteacher joined the school in April 2006. Three teachers in Key Stage 2 are relatively new to the profession. In April 2007 the school is due to move to new purpose built premises.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with a number of good features, such as the quality of education in the Nursery, the pupils' personal development and well-being and the support for their social and emotional development. While achievement is satisfactory overall, the more able pupils are capable of achieving higher standards. Progress in writing is only just satisfactory and too few pupils reach above average levels in mathematics.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and meets the learning needs of the majority of the pupils. Nevertheless, the pupils' work is not always matched well enough to their different starting points and capabilities, and this slows their rate of progress. The curriculum is satisfactory although the setting arrangements in Years 3 and 4 are not making a sufficiently positive difference to the pupils' achievement. Pupils behave well, have positive attitudes and enjoy coming to school. They receive a satisfactory level of care, support and guidance. Parents are very supportive and responses from inspection questionnaires are overwhelmingly positive. One parent said, 'The school has a great atmosphere and staff are very friendly.'

The effectiveness of leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners is satisfactory. The headteacher has a clear and accurate vision for the school's future improvement and has improved the school's analysis of assessment information. Senior teachers provide a satisfactory level of support and governance is also satisfactory. Monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance are sound but not sufficiently rigorous and systematic, particularly in relation to checking the quality of teaching and learning. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory, although some weaknesses remain in teachers' planning and their marking. The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement further, particularly in mathematics, writing and for the more able pupils.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, ensuring all teachers make good use of assessment to match the pupils' work consistently to their different learning needs.
- Improve the quality of monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance and implement more rigorous checks on pupils' progress in lessons and in their written work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

When pupils enter the school their attainment is slightly below average. They make good and sometimes rapid progress in the Nursery and satisfactory progress in the Reception Year. In Key Stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4 the majority of pupils attain

standards that are generally in line with what is expected for their age. Achievement is satisfactory although less positive in writing than in reading and mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress and their attainment compares favourably with national averages, particularly in reading. By the end of Year 4 a significant proportion of the pupils attain above average standards in reading. In each Key Stage too few pupils reach the higher levels in mathematics and many of the more able pupils are capable of making faster progress than they are currently achieving.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Most pupils enjoy school. They feel valued and secure and enjoy positive relationships with the adults they work with. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. There are particular strengths in moral and social development, which are reflected in pupils' good behaviour and their kindness and thoughtfulness to each other. Pupils respond positively when given responsibility, for example, when taking the fruit waste to the compost bin. However they are sometimes over dependent on adults in lessons. This is shown when they are not given sufficient opportunity for independent learning and become restless and inattentive. Pupils are well aware of the need to lead safe, healthy and active lifestyles and are proud of their 'Healthy School' status. They also make a good contribution to the community, for example by fund-raising for good causes, and singing in a local residential home at Christmas. Pupils' good personal qualities and satisfactory skills in literacy and numeracy give them a sound foundation for success in their future lives. Attendance is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. It is consistently good in the Nursery and there is some good teaching in Reception and Key Stage 2. When the pupils' activities are well planned, interesting and challenging, and teaching styles are lively they make good progress. Some teachers use open-ended questions skilfully to probe the pupils' understanding and challenge their thinking, although this is not a consistent feature in all classes. On too many occasions, expectations are not high enough, the pupils' work is not matched consistently well to their different learning needs and much of the teachers' marking does not show what the pupils are expected to do to improve their work. These weaknesses are slowing the rate of pupils' progress, particularly for the more able pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Focused intervention from outside agencies such as the speech therapy service, as well as the work of teaching assistants, helps the pupils with learning difficulties make sound progress. However some more able pupils sometimes miss out because the targets and work set for them are not challenging enough. The curriculum is enriched by visits to places of interest, such as a Hindu temple in Birmingham. There is good provision for personal, social, health education and citizenship. Currently not enough attention is given to planning for the development of specific skills in subjects other than English and mathematics. A rich environment for learning has been created both in the Nursery and Reception classes with a wealth of opportunities for learning through well planned purposeful play both indoors and outside.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

This is satisfactory overall although the pupils' pastoral support and guidance is good. Well thought out procedures ensure that the youngest children settle quickly in the Nursery. Pupils know that adults will help them if they have a problem and in all classes pupils and teachers work well together in a safe and secure environment. The good use of outside agencies to support vulnerable pupils, such as those experiencing difficulties with behaviour, has a positive influence on their progress. Rigorous child protection procedures are in place and regular health and safety checks are carried out. Academic support and guidance are just satisfactory. Arrangements for assessment and target setting systems vary in their effectiveness and are not used with sufficient rigour to guide teachers' planning. Pupils are not sufficiently aware of what their targets are, how well they are doing and what they need to do next in order to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The headteacher knows what needs to be done to raise achievement and standards and is introducing more coherent and helpful arrangements for tracking pupils' progress and their achievement. She receives satisfactory support from senior teachers who share a common sense of purpose for the school's improvement.

What is currently lacking is a rigorous and systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating the school's performance, particularly to check that the quality of teaching is making a sufficiently positive difference to the pupils' achievement. Self-evaluation is satisfactory although the school has a slightly generous view of its performance which is not matched by the achievements of the pupils. The headteacher and the senior management team are not yet giving a sufficiently strong lead in challenging

mediocre teaching, identifying what needs to be improved and then checking to see that weaknesses have been eliminated.

Where the school's leadership has made a positive difference, for example the continued development of small teaching groups in the Foundation Stage, the pace of pupils' progress has improved. School development planning is satisfactory and the move to new school premises is being managed well. The governing body carries out its statutory duties satisfactorily although they do not have a sufficiently accurate view of how well the pupils are achieving.

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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

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 disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	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 the 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?	3

¹ Grade 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.

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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	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	3
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for welcoming us to your school. For the two days we were with you we were made to feel very welcome. You were all very polite and helpful and we enjoyed talking with you about your work. Many of you told us that you really enjoy coming to school and like your teachers. We could see that when we visited your lessons.

Your school council is working hard to make sure that your ideas and suggestions about improving the school are listened to carefully. The 'playground pals' and 'friendship benches' show this well and make sure that you are not feeling lonely or left out at playtimes. All the adults who work with you look after you well. They make sure that you are safe and you told us that they listen to you when you have any worries or are feeling upset.

Your school does some good things with you but we think that it could do even more and become a very good school. We have asked Mrs Shearwood to make sure that your lessons are checked carefully so that all of you can do your best, especially in mathematics and writing, and that your teachers always give you work to do that is interesting and helps you learn new things a bit more quickly than you are doing at the moment.

We have enjoyed being at your school and wish you all the best for your move to the new school.