

Inspection of a good school: Catshill Middle School

Meadow Road, Catshill, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B61 0JW

Inspection dates:

2 and 3 November 2022

Outcome

Catshill Middle School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy in school and speak positively about being part of the Catshill Middle School 'community'. Staff give pupils individual support and guidance. This helps them to feel part of this community and to want to come to school every day. Classrooms and social areas are calm and orderly places. Pupils are safe in school and say that poor behaviour is rare. Staff support pupils who show challenging behaviour or need a 'timeout' very well. If bullying happens, staff work with pupils to sort out any issues quickly.

Leaders have expectations for all pupils. They have developed a curriculum that enables pupils to achieve well. Pupils study a broad range of subjects. Pupils and staff have good working relationships, which helps pupils to have positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are particularly enthusiastic about learning English and mathematics. Pupils develop secure literacy and numeracy skills, which gives them confidence with reading, writing and numbers in other subjects.

Leaders place a strong emphasis on supporting pupils' personal development. As part of the daily 'life skills' curriculum, pupils learn about their health and well-being. Pupils also develop their understanding of fundamental British values, equality and diversity. They take part in a wide range of extra-curricular sports, music and drama activities.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. Senior and curriculum leaders work together to discuss and evaluate the curriculum. Senior leaders have successfully developed specialist teachers in school, which has further improved curriculum planning. The well-developed curriculum has ensured that pupils know and remember more.

Leaders have carefully set out a sequence of topics in each subject. The sequence in each subject curriculum sets out how pupils' knowledge and skills will develop through the topics. For example, Year 5 history work on gender roles in Anglo-Saxon Britain develops

in Year 8 to how women's lives changed in Victorian Britain. Pupils confidently talk about what they know, remember and understand in this work.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. The majority of teachers check what pupils know and understand well during lessons. They use this information to identify and address gaps in pupils' learning straightaway. Teachers also usually check pupils' misconceptions in their written work to ensure that mistakes are not repeated. Pupils appreciate the help teachers give them and welcome the opportunity to improve their work and learn more. However, some teachers do not check pupils' learning well enough. When this happens, pupils develop gaps in their learning or repeat mistakes, which makes it harder for them to remember key subject knowledge.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) follow the same curriculum as other pupils. Teachers use 'pupil profiles' effectively to adapt their teaching so pupils with SEND can access the learning. Leaders identify pupils with weak literacy as soon as they join the school. Staff then provide pupils with effective, targeted support, including using new technology. This helps pupils to successfully improve their literacy skills.

Pupils' well-being is at the forefront of leaders' vision. Parents and carers say leaders show 'compassion' for pupils. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are highly respectful and positive. Bullying is rare. When it does happen, staff deal with it firmly. Pupils feel safe among their peers and say that staff support them very well. Leaders provide information about careers and future pathways. Pupils say they find this information useful.

Pupils enjoy a wide variety of enrichment opportunities. Many pupils undertake leadership responsibilities on the school council or as prefects. Pupils feel proud to join leaders' meetings about their school. Many pupils take part in choir and drama clubs and perform in school productions.

Senior leaders know their school very well. They act swiftly and with determination to improve any aspects that do not meet their high expectations. Governors know the school's strengths and areas for development. They are well informed about the curriculum and hold leaders to account for the decisions taken.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that safeguarding is 'everyone's responsibility'. Leaders make sure that all staff receive the training they need to identify pupils who are at risk of harm. Staff are fully aware of the potential risks to pupils within the local community. Where leaders identify that pupils and families need early help, they quickly contact external agencies to get support for them.

Safeguarding leaders meet and talk with pupils every day. Pupils identify up to five trusted adults they can talk to. Pupils know how to report any concerns they have. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including online and in the community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teachers do not check what pupils know and remember carefully enough during lessons and in their written work. This means that pupils develop gaps in their knowledge, and repeat mistakes. Leaders should ensure that all teachers use the school's assessment systems carefully, to identify and address gaps and mistakes in pupils' learning to enable them to successfully know and remember more.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	116958
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10205166
Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	9 to 13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	401
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mike Hill
Executive headteacher	Paul Essenhigh
Website	www.catshill-middle.worcs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	29 and 30 November 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause. This means that pupils in Year 8 receive information about the full range of education and training options open to them. This includes opportunities for a range of education and training providers to speak to pupils about technical and education qualifications and apprenticeships. Pupils in Years 5 to 8 receive information around careers and future plans.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors focused on the following deep dives: reading, mathematics, Spanish and history. Inspectors examined leaders' curriculum planning, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and talked with pupils about the way these subjects are taught. They also looked at other subjects to check how they are planned and taught.

- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents. These included information about behaviour, attendance, the school’s curriculum, and improvement planning. The school website was also checked.
- Inspectors talked to staff and leaders about safeguarding arrangements. They examined how leaders make employment checks on staff and scrutinised further safeguarding records. They also asked how incidents reported by pupils are recorded and analysed.
- Inspectors observed informal times of the day to evaluate safeguarding and pupils’ behaviour.
- Inspectors held meetings with governors, the executive headteacher, senior leaders, lead professionals, teachers and pupils. They also talked informally to pupils and staff to gather information about school life.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and free-text comments. Inspectors also considered Ofsted’s staff survey and pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Stuart Clarkson, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

Gwen Onyon

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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