

# Brewood CofE (C) Middle School

Inspection report - amended

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124452
<b>Local Authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	328144
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3-4 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Rashida Sharif HMI

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>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	9-13
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	439
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Doreen Ellis
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Swift
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 May 2006
<b>School address</b>	School Road Brewood Stafford ST19 9DS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01902 850266
<b>Fax number</b>	01902 851332

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<b>Age group</b>	9-13
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## **Amended Report Addendum**

Report amended due to administration error

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Brewood Church of England Middle School is a voluntary controlled school in the diocese of Lichfield, providing education for students aged 9 to 13 years. The school is situated in a rural location. Almost all students are of White British background. The percentage of students from minority ethnic groups or whose first language is not English is much lower than the national average. The percentage of students entitled to free school meals is low. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average.

The school has Inclusion Quality Mark, Activemark Award, Healthy Schools Award, Every Person Matters Award and Investor in People. The school has achieved the Financial Management in Schools Standards and the Bronze Eco award for its environmental work.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Brewood Church of England Middle School is a welcoming, and vibrant school which provides students with a good standard of education. It is highly regarded by parents and the local community. One parent commented that the school is, 'a happy caring environment for our children to learn and grow. My son is very happy here'.

The level of individualised support, an excellent curriculum and well-focused teaching all contribute to the good achievement and outstanding personal development and well-being of all students. The school is a lively and happy place where students want to be. As a result students participate in learning and activities enthusiastically. Although the overall level of attendance is good, for a very small minority it is satisfactory due to persistent absence which the school is working hard to eliminate. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding with many opportunities for these skills to be further enhanced through various theme days and festivals. These involve large numbers of students to share their feelings with others through, for example, their work in literature from around the world. Students' understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles is outstanding. The dynamic school council has played a central role in helping to select healthy options for lunch through working with the catering service. Students also run a healthy tuck shop on charity days. The recently built internet café is particularly successful in engaging students' interest and helping them to become independent learners. Students' understanding of how to be safe is outstanding. The responses from those interviewed on the school council show they feel very safe in school. The work of, for example, prefects, form captains, buddies and mentors means that students know who to turn to if they need help.

Students' overall achievement is good. By the end of Year 8, students reach average standards in English, mathematics and science. This represents good progress from their starting points in Year 5. Most groups make good progress, but there are occasions when some students of middle ability are not extended sufficiently to enable them to reach higher standards. The school is aware of this and is working on raising standards by the end of Year 6, especially in writing through, for example, good targeted support. There is good provision in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) lessons. However, the school recognises that teaching does not always consistently provide good opportunities for students to develop their numeracy, literacy and ICT skills across the full range of subjects. The school has formed excellent partnerships with external organisations to enrich the curriculum and provide additional support, care and guidance for students. Over a third of the parents responded to the questionnaires during the inspection, a significant majority of whom were very positive and supportive of the school.

Leadership and management are good. The school is well led by a dynamic headteacher who has a clear vision for the school's future. Together with the committed senior leadership team, he has driven the school's improvement since the last inspection. A culture of self-evaluation and rigorous monitoring and evaluation has developed in the school. All staff contribute to this process and capacity to improve is good. Staff and students are enthusiastic about the school's current direction of ensuring that every student achieves their best. The role and responsibilities of subject leaders have evolved considerably. They are good managers; however, the school recognises that further staff development is needed to support them in raising overall achievement and standards even further.

The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion. It understands the nature of the school community, its values and ensures that effective action is taken to enable students to engage with peers and gain an understanding of different backgrounds, cultures and religions, for example through participation in a British Council Project linking the school to a school in India.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise overall achievement and standards in all subjects, particularly by the end of Year 6 and especially in writing.
- Develop the role of subject leaders further to increase their contribution to raising achievement and standards by holding staff in their departments to account.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The school's data collected at the beginning of Year 5 indicates that for a significant proportion of pupils standards are below average. However, by Year 6, students achieve just below average standards in national tests in English, mathematics and science, indicating satisfactory progress. In English, standards in writing are not as good as standards in reading. Between Years 6 and 8, students make good progress. This is reflected in the standards students achieve in the tests they take at the end of Year 8, which suggest that a majority of students are achieving above the expected levels. This rapid progress is in part due to the classes being set according to ability and the targeted support for individual students. The school makes good use of assessment data to track individual students' progress; the accurate analysis of students' performance enables swift action to be taken to address any issues that have been identified. In English, for example, an analysis of last year's Key Stage 2 test papers revealed that students struggled with an aspect of writing which is now being addressed.

The school is becoming increasingly confident in monitoring differences in performance. The school's careful, rigorous and regular analysis of data on individual students and resulting intervention strategies demonstrate that recent improvements are maintained for all groups of students, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the small number of students from minority ethnic backgrounds. Notably, monitoring shows that boys do better in Years 5 and 6, but girls do better in Years 7 and 8 across the subjects. This difference is now being addressed at all levels by the school. The school's most recent analysis, supported by evidence from observations during the inspection, show that both the standards achieved by the end of Key Stage 2 and the progress of students at the end of Year 8 are on track to rise this year.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Students are polite and courteous; they behave well and enjoy attending school greatly. They say school is a place where they make friends easily and where they feel safe. That they enjoy school is evident in lessons, in their attitudes to work and in the pride they show in the school when welcoming visitors. They are particularly enthusiastic about the most recent development of the internet café which is always buzzing with excitement. Attendance is above the national average for middle schools. Students have an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles and many demonstrate this by contributing to and enjoying the healthy lunchtime menus that are carefully prepared. The personal, social and health education (PSHE)

programme further supports and contributes to students' outstanding personal development and well-being. There is a significant take-up of the very wide range of sporting and other activities provided at lunchtime and after school. The moral, spiritual and cultural development of students is outstanding. Students take great pride in themselves and their school. They are given many opportunities to take responsibility, for example by serving on the school council and acting as prefects, buddies or house captains. These and many other activities, such as residential visits are offered to every student, giving them opportunities to exercise responsibility, develop leadership skills and prepare them well for the next stage in school life. The school has established strong links with the community. Many adults, young and old, join the students for lunch on a regular basis as well as acting as helpers. Likewise, students are developing good skills which support their economic well-being. The new library and internet café enhance access to ICT facilities, and enterprise and charity days are extremely popular with students.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Students make good progress because of good and occasionally outstanding teaching. Teachers are confident and have secure subject knowledge. They show a willingness to adopt a variety of strategies including the use of modern technology. A strong sense of mutual trust between students and their teachers leads to good attitudes to learning. Students often work in groups or pairs, benefiting from positive interaction with their peers. The needs of students of different abilities within a class are almost always referred to in planning documents, and activities in lessons are generally well matched to their needs. Occasionally, work for middle ability students is not always sufficiently matched and this can affect the extent and pace of their learning. Teaching is most effective when assessment data is used to plan carefully for all abilities, for example, in a mixed ability Year 8 music lesson, students were highly motivated and achieved well. This was because the range of planned activities being used linked to history, and included the opportunity to research using the internet and watching a video. All this led some of the students to compose a simple blues sequence with the knowledge they had gained. Less successful lessons are too slow in pace and some teachers dominate by talking unnecessarily. This means that students lose enthusiasm and at best, make satisfactory progress. Use of assessment information in lessons to promote learning is increasing, and feedback to students is generally well judged and sensitively communicated. The best marking is effective in providing feedback on whether targets have been met and the next steps to be taken to improve work. The school is aware that this good practice is inconsistent across the school and effective plans are in place to bring about improvement.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The promotion of students' personal development and well-being is at the heart of the curriculum. The PSHE programme is well established and does much to enhance self-esteem and students' positive contribution to the school community. The range of extra-curricular opportunities is excellent and participation is high. All students are able to access the broad and rich curriculum and have opportunities, for example, to learn French and learn to play a musical instrument. The excellent relationships with the local churches further enhance students'

learning opportunities, as do the residential visits. Students speak highly of the themed days, the most recent being the India Day.

An excellent range of sporting, social and cultural out-of-hours activities adds greatly to the students' relish for school. Students speak enthusiastically of established clubs such as golf, knitting, cinema, debating and gardening and there are plans to introduce further activities such as yoga. A unique feature of the school is its decision to invite visitors regularly into school to eat lunch with the students. At the time of the inspection, a 97-year-old visitor entertained other visitors, students and staff with delightful harmonica playing and students wasted no opportunity to talk to the visitors and learn from their experiences.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Students are well supported and cared for. All safeguarding procedures fully meet current government requirements. The school environment is welcoming and it is justifiably proud of the quality and range of its provision to help all students develop into well-balanced young people. Students are fully included in all aspects of the school's life and every student experiences at least one residential visit every year. The school works extremely well with external agencies to provide strong support for vulnerable students, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The school makes increasingly good use of assessment data to track students' progress; the accurate analysis of student performance enables well-coordinated intervention to address individual needs. The school recognises that although practice is improving, it is not yet fully embedded across all areas. Marking in books is good with some that is outstanding. This is closely monitored by the senior management team. Most students know how well they are doing and understand what they need to do in order to improve their work further.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The school is led well by a passionate headteacher whose clear vision and a sense of purpose have brought staff together. He is ably supported by governors and a senior leadership team who share his vision for learning. The school knows what it is good at and where it needs to improve because of its accurate self-evaluation. Senior leaders provide subject leaders with effective support and guidance so that leadership across the school is improving. Resources are well managed and deployed efficiently. There are many established whole-school procedures, and the ongoing training and development of staff, underpinned by performance management, secures good capacity for the school to improve further. The monitoring of teaching and learning by the senior staff is increasing in rigour, and is starting to involve subject leaders. The school's decision to group students by ability in English, mathematics and science has been useful in helping teachers plan appropriately challenging and well-paced activities leading to raising overall achievement and standards.

Governors are actively involved in the life of the school and discharge their duties with commitment. They are increasingly involved in their own and the whole school self-evaluation and contribute to subject departments, engaging with them and asking challenging questions through their role as link governors. The work of the standards committee is particularly effective

in raising students' overall achievement and standards. They discharge their statutory duties well, are very supportive of the school and also provide sufficient challenge.

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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?	2
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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

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<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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**

5 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brewood Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Middle School, Stafford, ST19 9DS

Thank you for welcoming us on our recent visit to your school. We appreciated the warm welcome and the willingness with which you shared your experiences of being at the school. We enjoyed joining you during lunchtime in your recently built internet café. We can see why you are so proud of it and why you enjoy being there. We were also very impressed with how you involved people of all ages from your local community during lunchtime. They spoke very highly of you and how well you looked after them. They particularly enjoyed talking to you about their experiences.

We think you go to a good school that helps you to make good progress in your lessons and teachers work hard to make your lessons enjoyable. The school looks after you well and your personal development in your time at the school is outstanding. You enjoy school immensely. Your understanding of how to lead safe and healthy lives is excellent. We were impressed by how many of you take part in exercise and sport and attend after-school clubs. Your headteacher and all your staff care for you extremely well and you take great care of each other, too. Your involvement in the life of the school through, for example, being on the school council, as prefects, house captains and buddies is impressive.

To improve the school ever further, we have asked your headteacher and teachers to raise the overall achievement and standards in all subjects, particularly by the end of Year 6 and especially in writing. We have also asked them to develop the roles of subject leaders further so that they can support other teachers to improve on the work they do.

You can help by continuing to work hard, particularly in your writing. We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Rashida Sharif

Her Majesty's Inspector