

# Bell Lane Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	101259
<b>Local authority</b>	Barnet
<b>Inspection number</b>	376531
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 February 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Nick Butt

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	420
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Hickman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Elaine Wilson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 June 2009
<b>School address</b>	Bell Lane Hendon London NW4 2AS
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8203 3115
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8203 7636
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Nick Butt Additional inspector

Howard Jones Additional inspector

Una Stevens Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 27 lessons taught by 15 teachers. Meetings were held with parents, carers and pupils, the Vice Chair of the Governing Body, and a wide range of staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation including self-evaluation documents, strategic plans and other development plans. Inspectors scrutinised 162 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and those returned by staff and pupils.

## Information about the school

Bell Lane is larger than the average-sized primary school. The very large majority of pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic groups, the largest being Eastern European (almost a third of pupils). Most pupils speak English as an additional language, with over 50 different languages represented in the school. Large numbers of pupils join or leave the school outside the normal times, often joining speaking very little English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly average. The school meets current government floor standards which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

The school runs a daily breakfast club. The school shares its site with a children's centre, which is subject to separate 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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key findings

- Bell Lane is a satisfactory school. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have positive attitudes to learning, especially when they are fully involved in lessons. There is some outstanding provision in the Nursery and Reception. Overall effectiveness is not good yet because there is not enough consistently good teaching to accelerate the progress of all pupils from their low starting points.
- Achievement is satisfactory. Attainment is rising, but below average in Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. Eastern European pupils make good progress because of the good support they receive during interventions and in class. Not all teaching assistants are well deployed, especially at the start of lessons.
- Teaching is satisfactory. Planning has improved and sets out clearly what is to be learnt, but there is inconsistency in how well plans are actually implemented in lessons. Sometimes there is not sufficient challenge for more able pupils. There are some examples of good practice, especially in Key Stage 2, which bring learning alive for pupils. At other times pupils do not have enough opportunity to reflect on their learning and marking is inconsistent in showing pupils how to improve their work.
- Behaviour and safety are satisfactory. Pupils generally behave well in class and around the school, but some parents and carers and a small minority of pupils in their questionnaire returns expressed some concerns. Where teaching is satisfactory or very occasionally inadequate, low-level disruption can occur, as pupils become restless at spending too long on the carpet, for example.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have high expectations of staff and pupils, and their leadership of teaching has brought about improvements through clear guidance. They manage school performance satisfactorily, and carefully track pupils' progress. The roles of all middle leaders are not fully developed yet but some are taking on additional responsibilities. The governing body has some relatively inexperienced members but has begun to hold the school more to account.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
  - sharing best practice across the school
  - ensuring more able pupils are sufficiently challenged
  - ensuring marking is consistent so that all pupils know what they have to do to improve their learning.
  
- Raise attainment and achievement in reading, writing and mathematics by:
  - giving pupils more opportunities to reflect on their learning
  - having consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - ensuring objectives in literacy and numeracy lessons are tightly focused on developing key skills.
  
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - creating more opportunities for middle leaders to develop their roles
  - developing the role of the governing body in holding the school to account
  - reviewing the deployment of teaching assistants as essential partners in developing pupils' learning.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils are keen to participate in lessons and put forward ideas. Year 6 pupils became 'reading detectives' to infer information from a passage of text about time travel and to predict what they thought would happen next. In Year 4, pupils collaborated to write part of a creation myth and to find interesting vocabulary. A good emphasis on speaking and listening encourages pupils new to the English language to take part and helps them to become fluent speakers relatively quickly. The expectations of teachers vary, and in some classes there are fewer opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning or extend their thinking creatively. Most parents and carers think their children make good progress, although inspectors found that pupils make satisfactory progress overall.

Historically, attainment has been low but the picture is much improved now. However, some groups who experienced uncertainty in the past, such as the present Year 6, have gaps in their knowledge and understanding that the school is actively working to close. Other cohorts, including the present Year 5, have had positive experiences over time and their attainment is in line with national expectations. Eastern European pupils make good progress and perform better than their counterparts nationally. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage achieve well from very low starting points because teaching is consistently good or better in the

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Nursery and there are elements of outstanding practice in Reception. Nonetheless, pupils enter Year 1 with standards a little below average, especially in writing. Progress is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and attainment remains a little below average by the end of Year 2. In Key Stage 2, where there is a greater proportion of good teaching, progress, while satisfactory overall, accelerates, although attainment varies depending on pupils' prior learning experiences. For example, value added for the 2011 Year 6 cohort was significantly above average even though attainment remained low in English and mathematics because their Key Stage 1 assessments were so low. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve as well as their peers because support is appropriate and their progress is carefully monitored. Inclusion meetings bring a range of adults together who have contact with the pupils, so that all are involved in agreeing future support. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals make satisfactory progress and attain in line with their peers nationally.

The school has done much to give pupils a love of reading, and those who read to inspectors were very positive about the subject. There is good support for pupils who are at risk of falling behind in their reading. The teaching of the sounds that letters make (phonics) is a particular strength in the Nursery and Reception, but more variable elsewhere in the school. Attainment in reading is generally below average by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, but improving rapidly in Key Stage 2.

**Quality of teaching**

Most parents and carers who responded to questionnaires said they thought the teaching was good. Inspectors found some real strengths in teaching in different parts of the school, but inconsistency across subjects and year groups. The quality of marking varies from class to class. There are some good examples of comments that show pupils what they have to do next to improve their work, but at other times marking shows that teachers are too easily satisfied and not sufficiently evaluative. Pupils are set interesting challenges for homework, which they enjoy completing.

The planned curriculum is having a mainly positive impact on learning, as planning is consistent across the school and detailed in setting objectives. In some lessons, however, more able pupils are insufficiently challenged, and there is not enough focus on teaching key skills. Pupils collaborate well and more-able pupils will often support their classmates in completing activities. For example, children in the Nursery were delighted to be invited to the Three Little Pigs' birthday party and made themselves busy making cakes, writing replies and wrapping presents. Teachers use resources well to engage and assist pupils. In Year 5, pupils were engrossed in writing persuasive letters linked to a text they were reading, and had access to all the prompts and resources they needed. Probing questioning by the teacher extended their thinking and helped them to resolve the moral dilemma they were tackling. Teaching generally has a positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, especially in celebrating the full range of languages pupils speak. However, pupils do not always have sufficient opportunities to reflect upon their learning.

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In some lessons the pace of learning slows because too long is spent on the introduction and teachers do not deploy teaching assistants to best effect. Teaching assistants play a valuable role, especially in supporting pupils at the early stages of learning English, but sometimes spend time waiting for the teacher to finish a whole-class activity that does not meet the needs of all pupils, when they could be supporting or challenging a specific group.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Most pupils behave well and show consideration to one another. Behaviour in lessons varies according to the quality of teaching. When they are interested in what they are learning, pupils apply themselves well. On other occasions, if the pace of the lesson is slow or pupils are bored because they are not sufficiently challenged, there are examples of low-level disruption or lack of engagement. Questionnaire returns reflected some concerns about what behaviour is like over time for a small minority of pupils and some parents and carers. Pupils say that bullying is not a problem, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying related to special educational needs, race, religion or belief. School records support this view. Pupils are confident that staff will deal with any concerns they may have. Parents and carers overwhelmingly think that their children are safe at school, a view supported by the pupils themselves. They have an appropriate understanding of how to stay safe and avoid putting themselves in potentially risky situations, such as through using the internet. Attendance has been low in the past, but has improved rapidly and was above average in the autumn term.

### **Leadership and management**

The headteacher and deputy headteacher are ambitious for the school and have overseen improvements in teaching and learning and in the progress pupils make, particularly in English at Key Stage 2. Regular checks are maintained on teaching by senior leaders and increasingly by subject leaders, and teachers receive clear feedback on how to improve. Subject leaders are committed to bringing about improvement, and are keen to take on more responsibility for standards and achievement through leading professional development and monitoring lessons. Initiatives to improve mental mathematics, guided reading and pupils' engagement with science have had a positive impact in the past year. Self-evaluation identifies correctly the areas the school needs to develop, but judgements about performance are sometimes over-generous. The comprehensive strategic plans give a good overview of the school's work, but do not highlight sufficiently the key priorities for improvement. The governing body is supportive of the work of the school and beginning to challenge leaders and managers, especially over achievement and teaching. It ensures that safeguarding requirements are fully met and that pupils are kept safe. These significant improvements in teaching and its impact on English, in particular, show the school has the capacity for further improvement.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and includes opportunities for pupils to apply

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their skills across different subjects. For example, pupils have been basing mathematical work around the Olympic rings. The curriculum has a generally positive impact upon pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, encouraging pupils to work together and to consider moral codes. In assemblies pupils reflect upon their strengths and set goals for themselves. In some classes teachers make the curriculum creative and relevant for pupils, but this is not consistent everywhere. The school promotes equality and tackles discrimination, celebrating the wide range of cultures and languages its pupils bring to school. Pupils are valued as individuals, and the school has been particularly successful in helping those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable to overcome barriers to learning. Careful analysis of data enables leaders and managers to keep track of pupils' performance and to intervene in a timely fashion to prevent any underachievement. The well-run breakfast club provides pupils with a healthy and friendly start to the day.

## 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.**



29 February 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Bell Lane Primary School, Hendon, NW4 2AS**

Thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school and sharing your views with us. Bell Lane provides you with a satisfactory education. You told us you enjoy school and usually find lessons interesting. Those of you who are learning English do well. The youngest children make good progress because the teaching is mainly good or better in the Nursery and Reception.

For the school to improve further we have asked leaders and staff to:

- make sure you always have work that challenges you
- use marking to show you how to improve your work
- give you time to think about what you are learning
- make the best use of teaching assistants
- help subject leaders to check how well you are doing.

You all can help by telling your teachers what you enjoy about learning and taking on board the advice they give you when they mark your work.

Thank you once again for your help, and our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Nick Butt  
Lead inspector

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