

# Byron Court Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	101497
<b>Local authority</b>	Brent
<b>Inspection number</b>	376574
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Martin Beale

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	615
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jo Jhally
<b>Headteacher</b>	Martine Clark
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13–14 May 2009
<b>School address</b>	Spencer Road Wembley Middlesex HA0 3SF
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<b>Fax number</b>	020 8908 2447
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	22–23 March 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	376574



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Martin Beale	Additional inspector
Lyn Riley	Additional inspector
Sami Miller	Additional inspector
Lucia Devine	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Over 16 hours were spent observing teaching and learning in parts of 30 lessons taught by 20 members of staff, holding discussions with pupils about their learning, and hearing pupils read. Inspectors held meetings with staff and members of the governing body including the Chair. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and scrutinised pupils' books, assessment data and case studies of specific pupils. They also looked at evidence of the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning. The inspection team analysed 316 responses to the questionnaire returned by parents and carers.

## Information about the school

Pupil numbers are rising in this large school. Almost all pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds and the majority are of Asian heritages. A high proportion of the pupils speak English as an additional language and some are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is broadly average. More pupils than in other primary schools join or leave other than at the usual times. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in three Reception classes. The school has recently received the Sustainable Travel Award and achieved enhanced Healthy Schools status. The headteacher has been in post since January 2011. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

An after-school club uses the school's premises. This provision is not managed by the governing body and as such is inspected separately.

**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>1</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>1</b>

## Key findings

- This is an outstanding school. It has seen a remarkable improvement in recent years, particularly under the current headteacher’s highly effective leadership. Others in the restructured leadership team make a very significant contribution in supporting her drive for ever-higher standards. Outstanding achievement is based on the high quality of much of the teaching, the pupils’ exemplary behaviour and their very positive attitudes to learning.
- Attainment has risen considerably since the previous inspection and is well above average by the end of Year 6. Almost all pupils reach the level expected for their age in English and mathematics; many reach higher levels. This represents outstanding progress given pupils’ starting points.
- Much of the teaching from Reception to Year 6 is imaginative, challenging and pitched carefully at the needs of the pupils, although on a small number of occasions teachers do not sufficiently engage pupils through skilled questioning. Pupils are very clear about their levels and next steps in writing but less so in mathematics. The rich and vibrant curriculum provides many memorable experiences and promotes the pupils’ excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The pupils’ outstanding behaviour, their consideration and respect for others, and their ability to work as part of a team help to generate a very harmonious and purposeful environment for their development. They are highly motivated and determined to be successful.
- The headteacher has acted decisively since her appointment in providing a clear vision for the school supported by a strong and cohesive leadership team and highly effective governing body. The headteacher has introduced a relentless and successful drive to improve teaching and learning. The performance of staff is very closely monitored and individual support provided to meet the aim of all becoming high quality practitioners.

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

- Accelerate learning further by increasing the proportion of outstanding teaching paying particular attention to:
  - developing teachers' questioning skills
  - enabling pupils to understand how well they are doing in mathematics and the steps they can take to improve and meet their targets.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Inspection evidence confirms the strongly expressed views of parents and carers about the rapid progress made by their children. Year 6 test results were well above average in 2011 in all subjects, giving pupils a very firm platform for success in secondary school and beyond. There are no significant variations in the attainment and progress of different groups of pupils, including those at an early stage of acquiring English and the relatively small number of pupils eligible for free school meals. All achieve equally well. Individually tailored programmes for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are carefully targeted, based on early assessment of their specific learning difficulties and support outstanding learning.

Children enter Reception from a wide range of pre-school settings and some come straight from home. Their skills on entry are below those expected for their age, particularly in literacy, and a significant number have very limited English language skills. They quickly settle and form strong friendships with other children in a well-equipped and stimulating environment. They respond enthusiastically in sessions led by adults and become highly engaged when initiating learning and working with others. They make excellent progress. Attainment is broadly average by the time they leave Reception in all areas of their learning, except for aspects of literacy, where attainment is below average.

Pupils, from Reception upwards, become immersed in language and benefit considerably from excellent modelling by adults. This underpins the excellent progress of pupils speaking English as an additional language. Once confident and fluent, their progress accelerates and they are among the school's highest-attaining pupils by the end of Year 6.

Typically, learning is fast paced and ensures the rapid development of the pupils' key skills. They acquire new knowledge quickly, and the frequent application of literacy and numeracy across a wide range of subjects helps to deepen the pupils' understanding. The focus on improving writing has reaped considerable benefits, particularly in engaging more reluctant boy writers. Extended pieces of writing are planned carefully, and included refined and ambitious vocabulary.

Early reading skills develop rapidly through sharply focused and well-taught phonics sessions (the sounds made by letters) and a 'Reading day' each week when pupils

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read to an adult in school and are set comprehension tasks. Attainment in reading is broadly average by the end of Year 2. This rapid progress continues across Key Stage 2 where pupils develop a great love of books and particular authors. They are expected to read regularly at home and have many opportunities to develop their reading skills across other subjects. Consequently, attainment in reading is well above average by the end of Year 6.

### **Quality of teaching**

Parents and carers, along with their children, are accurate in their praise for the high quality of teaching. Teachers have high expectations, and the most effective challenge the pupils' thinking through skilled questioning and the judicious use of carefully chosen resources. As one Year 2 pupil put it, 'In literacy, we have to work hard and think, think, think!' Many of the characteristics of the best teaching were seen in an outstanding Year 6 lesson as pupils identified features to create suspense in their writing. They sat enthralled by the atmosphere of foreboding generated by a video clip and text from '*The Lord of the Rings*'. The teacher used her voice skilfully to add additional suspense. Lessons such as this move forward at pace when teachers seek to engage pupils fully, although opportunities to engage them further are missed in a small number of lessons when teachers do not question to probe their understanding.

Teachers extract every opportunity to promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They stimulate their imaginations through carefully chosen texts and resources, and encourage them to consider different viewpoints. Drama is used skilfully to stimulate the pupils' writing, as when Year 5 pupils prepared poems in pairs for performance based on listening to '*Walking with my iguana*'. Pair and group work, whether this is on particular activities or when discussing ideas with each other, make a major contribution to learning and developing collaborative skills.

Teachers adapt the curriculum well to support the learning of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and those at an early stage of acquiring English. Well-deployed, carefully briefed and highly skilled support staff move learning forward effectively through their well-timed interventions, while not creating dependence.

Pupils know precisely how well they are doing in writing and what they need to do to improve their work. They have clear targets, and opportunities to assess their work and the work of others. Their 'Target flaps' at the back of their books enable them to identify their individual next steps. Marking sets up a dialogue between teacher and pupil enabling work to be improved. By contrast, pupils are unsure how well they are doing in mathematics and marking does not always help them to improve their work.

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

Records of incidents confirm that the excellent behaviour observed during the inspection is typical for the school. The vast majority of parents and carers and their

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children support this view and the view that pupils are safe in school. Conduct in lessons and around the school is respectful, very orderly and safe. The pupils' exceptionally positive attitudes to learning, their refined teamwork skills and their perseverance when working on tasks make a major contribution to their excellent learning. The school's behaviour policy is consistently applied by all members of staff, so pupils feel very safe and say they are treated fairly. Attendance and punctuality are improving strongly since expectations have been made clear to parents and carers, and the introduction of a policy of 'zero tolerance' of holidays in term-time. Attendance is now above average.

Pupils show huge respect for each other and take considerable care to help newcomers settle in quickly. They undertake with great maturity any responsibilities such as Year 6 pupils organising 'huff and puff' activities for Key Stage 1 pupils at lunchtime. They understand very well the consequences of their actions and, when a transgression occurs, they are helped to restore harmony by apologising. Where pupils have identified behavioural and emotional difficulties, the school's action helps them to learn how to modify their behaviour so that they can participate fully in school life.

Pupils have a very sharp insight into how to keep themselves and others safe at school, in the community and when using the internet. Break and lunchtimes are calm and pupils of all backgrounds play harmoniously together. Pupils say there is no bullying or harassment. Records show that racist behaviour and bullying incidents are very rare. Although a small number of parents and carers expressed some concern in the questionnaire, these are not borne out by inspection findings or the views of pupils.

### **Leadership and management**

The school's outstanding capacity for further improvement is built on the headteacher's high expectations of everyone and a relentless drive to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Accurate self-evaluation has enabled incisive planning to tackle key priorities. As a result, significant and sustained improvements have taken place in the pupils' achievement, behaviour, attendance and punctuality. The headteacher and senior team have also successfully driven forward improvements in the pupils' writing. The new faculty structure is bringing staff closer together and giving everyone a voice in decision making. Changes to the structure of the well-led governing body mean that governors are well informed, challenging and fully involved in planning for the school's future. They, and school leaders, have also ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are in place, checked, regularly reviewed and reflect the impact of changing new technology. The exemplary child protection arrangements include regular training in procedures for all staff.

By using a wide variety of mechanisms to check the impact of teaching on pupils' progress, the senior team is able to pinpoint where further individual training is needed. This has been highly productive in improving the performance of individual teachers and support staff. The careful attention to checking the progress of all

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pupils reflects the school's strong commitment to promoting equality and has resulted in no significant variations in the performance of different groups.

The curriculum promotes the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively. The sharp focus on basic skills is enhanced by careful planning to develop skills of literacy and numeracy within cross-curricular topic themes. Topics such as the Rainforest, World Art and Nigeria provide pupils with rich and extensive insights into other cultures. The school's harmonious atmosphere is a testament to the success in tackling discrimination, and promoting an understanding and respect of other customs and cultures.



## 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.**



26 March 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Byron Court Primary School, Wembley HA0 3SF**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspection team when we visited your school recently and to the Year 6 pupils who kindly showed us around. Thank you also for sharing your views with us and returning the questionnaires.

We were impressed with how hard you work and your pride in the part you play in school life. We were particularly impressed by your clear and confident answers to our questions. We found that Byron Court is an outstanding school. These are the things we liked most.

- We agree with you that you are taught very well. Teachers make lessons interesting and help you to make excellent progress.
- Members of staff take very good care of you, and teach you how to keep yourselves safe and deal with any risks you might face.
- Your very positive attitudes to learning and exemplary behaviour contribute significantly to your outstanding progress.
- The curriculum provides many enjoyable experiences for you, including many interesting topics, clubs and other events.
- Those of you who find learning difficult or are new to speaking English are supported well so that you make similar outstanding progress as others.

We have asked the school to ensure that all teachers' questioning skills are brought up to the quality of the very best, and that marking in mathematics helps you to understand how to improve your work and meet your targets.

All of you can play your part in helping the school to get even better by continuing to work hard. Well done for showing such pride in your school and in your achievements.

Yours sincerely

Martin Beale  
Lead inspector

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