

Bellfield Infant School (NC)

Vineyard Road, Birmingham, West Midlands B31 1PT

Inspection dates

2–3 November 2016

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 2 are too low.
- The most able pupils do not make rapid and sustained progress as they move through the school. As a result, too few pupils reach the higher standards of attainment.
- There is too much inconsistency in the quality of teaching. Not all teachers have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can and should achieve.
- School leaders' systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are not sufficiently rigorous or accurate. As a result, plans for improvement are not sharply focused on the most important priorities for the school.
- Systems for holding teachers to account for the outcomes of pupils are not robust enough.
- Pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to use their mathematical knowledge and reasoning skills to solve problems.
- Teachers do not consistently ensure that pupils follow up the feedback that is provided through their marking of writing.
- Governors do not have a sufficiently detailed knowledge of the work of the school. They are consequently not in a strong enough position to provide appropriate levels of challenge and support to school leaders.
- The recently appointed early years leader has not yet had opportunities to develop and apply her skills in monitoring and evaluating the quality of all aspects of the provision.
- Outcomes for children in the early years provision are too low. While children settle well due to the care and support that staff provide for them, there is not a sufficiently strong focus on adults promoting and leading children's learning.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders place the well-being of the pupils at the heart of the work of the school. As a result, pupils feel safe, secure and valued.
- The curriculum is highly relevant, and cross-curricular projects widen pupils' experiences, raise their awareness and aspirations and help instil core values of respect and tolerance.
- Pupils' behaviour is consistently good throughout the school day.
- Attendance has improved due to the very effective support that the school provides for pupils and families, including those facing challenging circumstances.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good in all classes by:
 - ensuring that all teachers have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can and should achieve and set work that is well matched to pupils' abilities
 - providing the most able pupils with work that is sufficiently challenging in all subjects
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills in reasoning and problem-solving
 - ensuring that teachers check that advice given to pupils about how they can improve their written work is followed through and applied in subsequent pieces of writing.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that school improvement planning accurately focuses on the most important priorities for the school, has strong systems in place for measuring the impact of actions taken, and has clearly defined timescales for when the targets will be met
 - ensuring that school leaders use monitoring and evaluation effectively to identify both the strengths and weaknesses in the work of the school and to then bring about improvements in teaching and outcomes for pupils
 - ensuring that performance targets set for teachers have clear and measureable links to improving outcomes for pupils
 - developing the roles of governors so that they have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are in a strong position to support and challenge school leaders.
- Improve early years provision by:
 - ensuring that leaders develop their skills in monitoring and evaluating the quality of all aspects of the provision and develop clear and realistic plans for improvement
 - ensuring that there is an appropriate balance of adult-led learning and child-initiated activities that enables all children to make rapid progress from their starting points in school.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- While school leaders carry out different types of monitoring of the work of the school, including observations of lessons and scrutiny of teachers' planning, the outcomes are not evaluated systematically or thoroughly to identify the most important and pressing areas for improvement. This means that leaders do not have an accurate or fully realistic view of all the school's strengths and weaknesses. As a result, there is still too much teaching in school that is not yet securely good.
- School improvement planning lacks precision. Plans do not focus sharply enough on what is needed to bring about the necessary improvements in teaching and outcomes for pupils. Planning lacks clear success criteria and tightly defined timescales for when the necessary actions will have been implemented. This limits leaders' capacity to evaluate the impact and success of their action on the quality of teaching, or the progress and attainment of pupils across the school.
- The systems that school leaders have in place for holding teachers to account for the quality of teaching do not focus sharply on the outcomes of pupils. The targets that are set for teachers each year lack clear and measureable success criteria linked to specific improvements in pupils' progress and attainment.
- School leaders have taken action in the past to address teaching that has not been good enough and this has resulted in a number of teachers leaving the school and others joining. However, leaders are aware that there is still too much inconsistency in the quality of teaching.
- The reasonably high turnover of teaching staff means that the headteacher and deputy headteacher have to undertake the majority of leadership and management tasks within the school. They recognise that there is a need to share the workload across other staff, but have not yet established the next layer of middle leaders who can take on responsibility for leadership of subjects such as mathematics and English.
- The local authority, through its commissioned services, has recently identified that outcomes for pupils in school are not high enough and recognises that there is a need to support school leaders in bringing about improvement. However, specific action has not yet occurred and, as a result, there has not been any impact on teaching or pupil outcomes.
- The headteacher has placed a high emphasis on ensuring that pupils' well-being and safety is at the heart of the school's work. This has resulted in a calm, caring and nurturing environment where all pupils are valued and supported. Effective measures have been taken to provide support for parents and their families. The welfare and pastoral lead has a strong knowledge of, and empathy with, the local community. Her appointment has had a positive and successful impact on gaining parents' confidence in the school and on supporting the most vulnerable pupils and their families. The very large majority of parents who responded to the online survey said that they were confident that their children were safe in school.
- School leaders make effective use of the pupil premium funding. Additional staff have been appointed to provide small-group and one-to-one tuition to disadvantaged pupils.

In addition, a trained speech therapist has been employed for four days each week to provide specialist language support to the large number of pupils who start at school with limited communication skills. This has resulted in these pupils developing confidence and skills in speaking and listening which have enabled them to more easily access all aspects of learning. Good use is made of the additional special educational needs funding, for example through the employment of additional education assistants to provide small group and individual support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

- During the previous academic year, all staff, led by the headteacher, were involved in revising the curriculum so that it was more relevant to the pupils of the school. Leaders' drive to ensure that all pupils have opportunities to widen their experiences and to have high aspirations of what they can achieve in life is supported through the themes that pupils study. Subjects such as geography, history and technology are taught through a series of cross-curricular topics such as 'Knights, dungeons and dragons' and 'Plots, plague and puddings'. Pupils' learning is enhanced and supported through visits, including to Warwick Castle and West Midlands Safari Park.
- The additional sports funding has been used effectively to extend the range and quality of physical activities for the pupils. The school employs an external sports coach who works with each class each week and who also leads after-school clubs, including multi-sports and tag rugby. Staff confidence in teaching games and physical activities has been developed. An increasing number of pupils participate in the extra-curricular activities. Pupils are also taught about the positive impact of regular physical activity on their health and well-being.
- School leaders show a strong commitment to raising aspirations for pupils and making them aware of the world beyond their school. Leaders ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well supported. Regular opportunities are taken to ensure that pupils are able to gain an understanding of different faiths and beliefs, including through participation in religious festivals, such as Eid and Diwali. Pupils' awareness of different cultures has been enhanced through, for example, opportunities to watch and take part in African drumming and Indian dancing.
- Pupils also develop a good understanding of their roles as citizens of this country through the promotion of core values such as respect, tolerance and the right of law. An example of their developing understanding of democracy was seen in a Year 2 writing lesson related to the Gunpowder Plot. Pupils showed great interest and maturely discussed the links between Guy Fawkes and the current-day British parliamentary system.

Governance of the school

- The governance of the school is not yet fully effective. Governors do not have a sufficiently accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses to challenge and support leaders to bring about improvement.
- There have been a considerable number of changes of governors during the past year, including the chair of governors, who took up her post in September 2016. Governors have also made changes to the way that they operate and no longer have separate committees with responsibility for specific aspects of the school's work. These changes are still in their infancy, and consequently it is too early to say whether they will

increase the effectiveness of the governing body.

- Governors have received training in the use of the external information that is available to them, but do not use this information fully yet to compare pupils' outcomes to those of other schools. While governors receive termly reports from the headteacher on the progress and attainment of the pupils in the school, the information does not provide them with a clear and cohesive view of whether the outcomes of pupils are improving or declining.
- Governors' depth of understanding of the quality of teaching in school is not consistent across the whole governing body. As a result, governors are not in a strong enough position to ask searching and challenging questions of school leaders about what action is being taken to bring about the necessary improvements.
- Governors have been proactive in ensuring that the resources that are available to the school are used more effectively. Their actions have ensured that the financial advice and support that the school purchases from the local authority is now more sharply tailored to the specific needs of Bellfield Infant School. Governors have also been actively involved in managing the challenging increase in pupil numbers and the introduction of additional classes.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The process and practices that are in place to ensure that the well-being and safety of all the pupils in school are robust, thorough and clearly understood by all members of staff. This has helped to create a culture where safeguarding is at the forefront of all of the school's work and is seen as everybody's responsibility. As a result, pupils are safe and well looked after.
- Safeguarding training for all staff is regular and thorough. Teachers and all other staff have a clear understanding of the signs to look out for that may indicate if a pupil is at risk and the processes for reporting any concerns. Newly appointed staff receive safeguarding training as part of their induction to the school before they begin to work with pupils. Recruitment systems for checking staff suitability to work with pupils are rigorous and effective.
- Senior staff with responsibility for safeguarding in school are tenacious in ensuring that, when a pupil is at risk, appropriate action is taken by all involved, including the local authority and the police. Where external agencies have been slow to act, staff have been resolute in pursuing implementation of appropriate action to protect pupils. Record-keeping is thorough and detailed.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is too inconsistent across the school and, as a result, pupils do not achieve the outcomes of which they are capable. Teachers do not all have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can achieve and consequently set work that is sometimes too easy or sometimes too hard for pupils.
- Teachers do not consistently make sure that pupils understand what is expected of them. As a result, pupils are often unable to successfully complete the learning

activities that they are set. Too often, the same activity is set for all pupils and this slows the pace of learning. On too many occasions, the same question is asked of all pupils, with only a minority of the class then volunteering to answer. Teachers do not check whether other pupils have understood what has been taught, or direct questions at specific pupils.

- Too often, the learning tasks that are set for the most able pupils are too easy and do not demand them to think deeply. Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what these pupils can and should achieve, and this slows their pace of learning.
- Pupils are accurately taught mathematical skills, such as addition, subtraction and measurement, by teachers. However, they are not provided with sufficient opportunities to use this knowledge to solve problems using reasoning. This limits their capacity to understand the purpose of what they are learning and to be able to apply it independently in practical situations.
- The teaching of writing has improved in school and there is now a strong focus from teachers on ensuring that pupils have had an opportunity to talk about what they are going to write before committing ideas to paper. However, while teachers provide feedback to pupils in line with the school's marking policy, too often they do not check that pupils have acted on the comments, such as the need to use speech marks within their writing. Consequently, pupils do not successfully move on to the next stage of learning as quickly as they could.
- Teachers place a high priority on developing pupils' interest in reading. The teaching of phonics is generally accurate and is usually matched well to the different abilities of the pupils. Pupils are encouraged to read with their parents at home. An example of the school's work to support parents in their children's education was seen during the inspection. A significant number of parents attended a before-school 'fathers reading every day' session led by a member of staff. Parents were provided with strategies to help them support their children's reading and to encourage them to regard reading as a pleasant and purposeful activity.
- Teaching in the Year 2 classes is good. Teachers have a good understanding of the abilities of the pupils and use assessment information well to set work that is matched accurately to the needs of the pupils. They ensure that teaching is interesting, exciting and engages pupils' interest. For example, during the inspection a teacher read part of the story 'The day the crayons came home' to the pupils and then used questioning well to extend their vocabulary. As a result, pupils made good progress in extending their comprehension skills and reading abilities.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The nurturing and caring culture that has been developed by the headteacher and other staff has resulted in a calm and secure learning environment where pupils feel safe and valued.
- Pupils are considerate individuals who show respect for each other and towards adults. The comment of a pupil that, 'In this school, we show respect with our hands and our

feet' typified the positive attitudes that pupils have.

- Relationships between pupils and adults are positive and supportive. Pupils appreciate what the teachers and other adults do for them. Pupils use the 'worry boxes' that are in each classroom sensibly to share any concerns that they have with adults, and know that appropriate actions will be taken.
- Pupils appreciate the opportunities that they are provided with to take on responsibility. They value the work that the school council does and have confidence that the elected representatives from each class will convey their thoughts and ideas to school leaders accurately. They also know that the headteacher and other staff are interested in their contributions to improving the life of the school and will act upon them wherever possible.
- Teachers effectively develop pupils' understanding of what bullying is and why it is unacceptable. As a result, pupils say that bullying does not take place. Their views were supported by the large majority of parents who responded to the online survey.
- The before- and after-school clubs are well run and are valued by pupils and their parents. Pupil premium funding is used to provide places for disadvantaged pupils, and this demonstrates the school's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for all.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong, and this is demonstrated in the positive behaviour that is seen throughout the school day. Pupils play together sensibly on the playgrounds at breaktime and lunchtime. They quickly spot if another pupil is upset or hurt and make sure that this is brought to the attention of one of the adults.
- Pupils' behaviour in the dining room at lunchtime is of a consistently high standard. Pupils talk quietly to each other, show good table manners and listen attentively when an adult speaks. This is as a result of the high social expectations that are conveyed by all the staff.
- Pupils are polite, courteous and show pride in their school. They take responsibility for their own behaviour and recognise that the rules that are in place apply to, and are for the benefit of, everyone in the school. This is supporting them in their development as citizens within modern British society.
- Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and settle quickly to tasks in lessons. Occasionally, when the teaching is not well matched to the interests and abilities of the pupils, the attention of some pupils wanders and they do not engage fully in their learning. However, they do not distract other pupils and remain well behaved.
- The high focus that the school places on ensuring that pupils attend regularly and on time has resulted in improvements in attendance for all groups of pupils. Attendance is now only just below the national average. The welfare and pastoral leader has put in place robust and effective systems to monitor the attendance of pupils. She works closely with parents to ensure that they understand the impact that poor attendance can have on their child's learning.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Children enter the school with skills and knowledge that are below those that are typical for their age. Inconsistencies in teaching and a lack of high enough expectations from all teachers result in pupils not making sufficient progress as they move through the school. Outcomes for pupils by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 2 and move on to the next stage of their education are too low.
- Unvalidated key stage 1 assessment information for 2016 indicates that the proportion of pupils reaching expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics was below the national average. Evidence gathered during the inspection from school assessment information, scrutiny of pupils' work and observations in lessons indicates that there are still too many pupils who are working at standards below those that are expected for their age. While there is evidence that pupils in some classes are starting to make better progress, this is not consistently the case across the school.
- The most able pupils do not make sufficient progress and, as a result, too few reach the higher standards of attainment. Provisional data for 2016 shows that by the end of key stage 1, the proportion of pupils working at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics was well below the national average, with the greatest gap in reading.
- In 2015 and 2016, outcomes in the national phonics screening check for pupils in Year 1 were below the expected standard. There had been a slight increase in the proportion reaching the expected standard in 2016, but the gap with the national average had not narrowed. However, pupils in Year 2 had made good progress in their reading from when they were in Year 1, with the proportion reaching the expected standard in the rescreening check being in line with the national average.
- The progress and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are broadly in line with those of other pupils in school. However, their outcomes are improving and evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that they are starting to make more rapid progress. Consequently, differences in outcomes are diminishing compared to other pupils nationally. Leaders monitor the progress of disadvantaged pupils and ensure that the pupil premium funding is spent appropriately, providing small-group and one-to-one support.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well in school. A high priority is placed on ensuring that their individual needs are met, with trained teaching assistants working effectively alongside the pupils. As a result, these pupils are now achieving better outcomes and are narrowing gaps in their learning. The recently constructed 'Hub' building in the school provides a calm working environment for vulnerable pupils and those with more complex needs. This allows for intervention work from teachers and other staff that is well matched to each individual pupil.
- Outcomes across the curriculum are improving in subjects such as history, geography and science. This is as a result of the engaging topics that the pupils now study, allowing them to develop deeper understanding and to apply their reading and writing in purposeful activities.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children do not yet make consistently good progress from their low starting points across the early years. In 2016, less than half the children reached a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year, and as a result these children were not well prepared for their start in Year 1. Outcomes in Reception were lower than in the previous year. This was due in part to the fact that a third of the children were not able to start until February 2016, when the additional third class was put in place. However, not all teaching is good enough and, as a result, overall progress for children in the early years is still not good enough.
- The leader of the early years provision has only been in post in since the start of this school year. She has not yet undertaken any monitoring and evaluation of the provision and is consequently not in a strong enough position to identify where there are weaknesses and to then produce sharply focused improvement plans. School leaders are aware that this is a priority to ensure that children are able to make more rapid progress and to narrow the gaps in their learning.
- Teachers and other staff have ensured that all children in the early years provision feel safe and settled, and are now in a position to learn. While there are good opportunities for children to make decisions about the activities that they choose to take part in, opportunities for adults to work directly with children and lead their learning are missed. Adults do not always offer sufficient direction to the children, and consequently activities lack purpose and impact. This slows learning for some children, including the most able.
- Indoor and outdoor classrooms in both the Nursery and Reception are stimulating and well-resourced areas. During the inspection, children in Nursery were seen happily playing and working in the outside classroom. The teacher skilfully worked alongside a small group of pupils, talking to them about what they could see in the pond and encouraging them to develop their language by describing their observations. When a child spotted a frog, a purposeful discussion took place to identify whether it was real or a model, with children keen to express their views. This focus on language development is a strength across the early years provision.
- Children's behaviour in both the Nursery and Reception classes is good. Children are very well supported by all the staff in developing positive social skills and understand the need to take turns and to share. They are also encouraged to consider their own and others' safety, for example through timely reminders from staff to move carefully about and not to run inside the classrooms.
- Disadvantaged children are supported well throughout the early years provision. Funding is used effectively, including through the employment of additional teaching assistants, which allows for more opportunities for adults to work alongside individual children. This is particularly effective in helping children to settle in quickly and to start to develop their spoken language and vocabulary.
- All statutory welfare and safeguarding requirements are met. Staff are well trained, with a high number trained to the relevant standard in first aid.
- Parents are actively encouraged to be involved in their children's education. Parents spoken to during the inspection commented positively about the supportive processes

that are in place in the early years provision to help their children make a positive start at the school. Good links exist with local day-care providers and childminders to ensure that when children start at school, there is an effective transfer of information.

School details

Unique reference number	103289
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10000806

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	285
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sally Anderson
Headteacher	Gill Simm
Telephone number	01214 644855
Website	www.bellfieldinfants.co.uk
Email address	enquiry@bellfield-inf.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 March 2012

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about use of the sports funding and the school's accessibility plan on its website.
- Bellfield Infant School is slightly larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those who are supported by the pupil premium funding, is above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is the same as that found in most schools.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club for its pupils.

- A day-care centre operates on the school site. This is not run by the governors and is inspected separately.
- In the past year, the school has rapidly increased in size, with a move from two to three forms of entry. An additional class was introduced in Reception in early 2016 and there are now three classes in both Reception and Year 1.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 20 lessons or parts of lessons. A number of these observations were undertaken with the headteacher.
- The inspectors looked at work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read. They met with a group of pupils, including members of the school council. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime and at the end of the school day, as well as in lessons.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including assessments and records of pupils' progress, the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance, records of how teaching is managed and the school improvement plans.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, two middle leaders and the welfare and pastoral leader. The lead inspector met with three members of the governing body. He met with the school's improvement partner and a representative of the local authority's commissioned support.
- The inspectors took account of the 62 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and considered the 35 free-text responses from parents. They also talked to parents at the start of the school day. They considered the 28 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Adam Hewett, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Rowena Green	Ofsted Inspector
Sian Williams	Ofsted Inspector
Travis Latham	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2016