

# Bellfield Infant School (NC)

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	103289
<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	376870
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	David Driscoll

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	232
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Carl Flynn
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gillian Simm
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 January 2009
<b>School address</b>	Vineyard Road Birmingham B31 1PT
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 4644855
<b>Fax number</b>	0121 4644854
<b>Email address</b>	enquiries@bellfield-inf.bham.sch.uk

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<b>Registered childcare provision</b>	EY368812 Bellfield Daycare
<b>Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision</b>	26
<b>Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision</b>	28 January 2009

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<b>Age group</b>	3–7
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	12–13 March 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	376870



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## Introduction

Inspection team

David Driscoll

Additional inspector

Edgar Hastings

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed the teaching in 17 lessons. A total of eight teachers were observed teaching. Inspectors held meetings with parents and carers, children, members of the governing body and staff. They took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at the school's records of children's progress, safeguarding documentation, behaviour records and results of the school's checks on the quality of teaching. Inspectors analysed the responses of 71 parents and carers to the inspection questionnaire.

## Information about the school

Bellfield Infant School is of similar size to most primary schools. The number on roll has risen each year since the school was last inspected. Over half of the children are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of disabled children and those who have special educational needs is average and represents a range of different learning needs, although almost none currently have a statement of special educational needs. Around 75% of children are of White British heritage. The rest of the school population is made up of small numbers of children from a wide range of different minority ethnic groups.

A new headteacher was appointed at Easter 2011. She has been absent from school since October 2011 and an experienced headteacher has taken over in the interim. Three of the four classes in Years 1 and 2 were taught by temporary teachers during the inspection. The school has its own day care facility for children under the age of four.

The school shares its site with a children's centre and Bellfield Junior School. These are subject to separate inspections.

**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>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good school. Children are taught good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning from a young age. These provide the foundation for their good academic achievement. The school is not outstanding because teaching in Years 1 and 2 is not always as effective as that in the Nursery and Reception classes. The overall effectiveness of the day care is good.
- Children make good progress. They join with knowledge, skills and understanding that are well below the levels expected for their age. By the end of Year 2 children's attainment is broadly average. Attainment in writing and mathematics is improving more quickly than it is in reading. Disabled children and those who have special educational needs make good progress on the whole, but it is more varied than their peers.
- Behaviour and safety are good because all staff consistently reinforce high expectations of how children will relate to adults and other children. Behaviour is often exemplary in formal situations. Children have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe. Attendance is below average, but improving.
- Children are taught well. Teachers successfully encourage independence and foster children's curiosity. There is a strong focus on systematically teaching the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics from an early age, including in the day care facility. This approach continues in mathematics and writing in Years 1 and 2, but is not as well-developed in reading.
- The interim headteacher has quickly and accurately identified and addressed the key areas of teaching that require improvement. The performance of teachers has been managed particularly well to secure improvements in the progress made by children in Years 1 and 2. Parents and carers hold the school in very high regard.

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

- Improve the teaching of reading in Years 1 and 2 and accelerate children's progress by:
  - ensuring all children are given tasks that improve their reading skills
  - making better use of reading diaries to identify the next steps that a pupil needs to take to improve their reading skills.
- Raise attendance to at least the national average by December 2012 by:
  - following up concerns about absenteeism with parents and carers more quickly
  - implementing a staged procedure for dealing with absenteeism that includes action by the governing body.
- Reduce the variation in performance of disabled children and those who have special educational needs by:
  - carefully identifying, evaluating and coordinating the methods used to support them
  - drawing up clear and useful individual education plans
  - improving the quality and consistency of communication with parents and carers.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Parents and carers rightly say that their children make good progress. Few children who join the Nursery have attended the school's day care facility. Children are assessed thoroughly and accurately on entry to the Nursery. There are some variations in the accuracy of assessments of children's progress but these are being ironed out. All groups make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes so that attainment is average in reading, writing and number work on starting Year 1. Those children who have attended the day care facility build well on their achievements and leave the Reception class with above average levels of attainment. Progress is particularly good in personal, social, emotional, physical and creative development, where attainment is above average for the majority of children on starting Year 1. Progress is improving in Years 1 and 2 and attainment is now rising in writing and mathematics as improvements to teaching are starting to have a positive impact on children's progress. Attainment in reading is average overall.

Learning was good overall, especially in lessons observed in the Nursery and Reception classes. Activities were not always as well matched to children's needs in Years 1 and 2, especially in reading. Some groups in reading lessons were not given activities that helped them to improve their reading, but instead focused on finding letters in a wordsearch for example. By Year 2 children know the sounds that letters

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make, but do not always get enough opportunities in lessons to combine the sounds in order to read words.

In all lessons children were keen to do well and to try their best. They enjoyed learning about other cultures, such as what life is like in Brazil. There was a palpable sense of excitement when eggs hatched into chicks, which promoted expressions of wonder. Children's ability to sustain concentration for long periods is impressive. For example, two children with special educational needs worked with a teaching assistant on learning letters for 30 minutes without losing their focus for a moment. While all groups of children make good progress, it is more variable for individuals with disabilities or who have special educational needs. One disabled child, for example, made outstanding progress last year in reading and mathematics, but progress in writing was much slower. Children who have speech and language difficulties make rapid progress because they receive frequent high quality support from specialists.

### **Quality of teaching**

Children in all classes have access to a wide range of good quality resources that are used well to promote children's curiosity and sense of wonder. Good discipline is underpinned by the teaching of good moral values throughout the school. The Nursery and Reception classes are particularly exciting places to learn. Throughout the school teachers encourage children to think for themselves, rather than becoming reliant on adults. Children in Reception experimented with the angle of ramps when rolling balls, for example, to find out how to make them move more quickly while still remaining on the ramps. Parents, carers and children are justifiably very positive about teaching. Several parents and carers commented on how happy their children were to come to school.

Teaching assistants take every opportunity to develop children's speaking, writing and reading skills. The planned curriculum places a good emphasis on teaching the basic skills and understanding other cultures. Children are secure in understanding the different sounds that letters make because this aspect of reading is taught well in all classes. The development of further reading skills, such as blending the letter sounds to make a word, is not as effective in Years 1 and 2 where activities do not always focus on developing children's reading. For example, some children drew pictures after listening to a story, rather than learning to read it. Reading diaries note which books have been read, but not which words the child found difficult or what they needed to move on to next. Children are given lots of opportunities to develop their social skills, especially by working together and discussing topics. Such cooperation is now so well established that children do not have to be prompted by the teacher to turn to a partner and discuss topics.

Teachers ensure that groups make equal progress by carefully matching work to children's abilities. The variations in progress of disabled children and those who have special educational needs are a result of weaknesses in guidance provided on individual education plans. Teachers and teaching assistants are not always clear

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about how best to support a child, because the guidance is not as clear or as helpful as it could be.

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

Children's good behaviour and attitudes are the cornerstone of their good learning. They behave impeccably in assembly, where their moral, social and spiritual development is promoted exceptionally well and sets the tone for the day. The focus is on 'always'. Children know the importance of always behaving well; always being kind and always trying their best. They behave well in lessons, but sometimes their keenness to get on with their work is at the expense of listening to the teacher.

Children are considerate of others' feelings. They are very well mannered, interested in others, and respectful. There have been no exclusions or incidents of poor behaviour in recent times. Staff, children, parents and carers are all very impressed with behaviour at the school. They are adamant that there is no bullying of any kind, such as that which is physical, emotional, or racially motivated. This is because the children are taught excellent strategies to prevent unkind behaviour escalating. For example, all know that if a child says 'stop' with their hand out, it means they are not happy with what another is doing. Children are taught that everyone has their own 'space bubble' which must not be invaded. All staff consistently reinforce good moral values. Dinner supervisors play a particularly strong role in promoting good behaviour. Each works with an assigned class, keeps careful records of incidents and works closely with the class teacher to ensure all children are happy and well behaved.

Although improving, attendance remains below average. While some absenteeism is a result of childhood illnesses, other reasons are not always followed up with families quickly enough by the school or by the governing body

### **Leadership and management**

The school has a strong capacity for improvement under the good leadership provided by the interim headteacher and Chair of the Governing Body. Strengths have been maintained since the school was last inspected and weaknesses, such as in children's spelling, have been addressed well. The interim headteacher has an entirely accurate view of the quality of teaching, and how it can be improved. Effective actions have been taken to improve the effectiveness of temporary staff. There has been a focus on improving assessment procedures through good quality training. All staff now ensure equality by building on accurate assessments of what individual children have learnt previously. The evaluation of provision for disabled children and those who have special educational needs has not been as effective in identifying what works well and what is less successful in promoting their progress. The Chair of the Governing Body has been particularly decisive in ensuring that safeguarding requirements are met and followed to the letter.

The curriculum meets children's needs well. It has a good impact on children's

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spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. All children know the routines, such as after lunch is the time when everyone learns to read, so are well prepared for each lesson. Topic work provides good opportunities to learn about other faiths and cultures, although the topics themselves do not always link pieces of work coherently. The many opportunities to work in groups and pairs promote social development well. All staff are consistent in their approach to tackling discrimination. They are very successful in teaching children to be kind to everyone and to celebrate differences.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly happy with the school. Links with them are very strong. The morning story time in nursery, for example, is attended by large numbers of parents and carers. They see how well their children behave and learn how to read a story with their children in the most effective way. The link with the Children's Centre allows the school to share facilities and quickly refer parents and carers to additional support when it is required. Most communications are of good quality, but this is not always the case for parents and carers of disabled children and those who have special educational needs. Communications sometimes take too long to reach them and the content does not always help them to understand what support is being provided at school or what they need to do to additionally support their children at home.

## The Early Years Foundation Stage delivered in the registered childcare provision

Children come from a wide area to attend the day care as it rightly has a good reputation. Children are well cared for. They make good progress and leave the setting with skills, knowledge and understanding that are typical for their age. Resources are well organised to allow children to follow their own interests while promoting their basic skills. Children loved the bubble blowing activity for example, where they were taught how to purse their lips in order to aim their blowing, before catching and touching bubbles, which promoted their coordination. ‘Scrimbling’ is an important daily event, where children develop their fine motor skills and learn the first steps in making marks that will lead to learning to write letters and numbers. Each child’s achievements are carefully noted on a noticeboard, so parents and carers can see what they have been doing. Staff use these notes to plan the next day’s activities to build on what each child has achieved and ensure that all make equally good progress.

The well-qualified staff work effectively as a team. The leader is a great motivator and all staff are keen to improve provision. Welfare and hygiene provision is good and safeguarding requirements are met in full. Parents and carers are very appreciative of the quality of provision and of the close links with the children’s centre which allow them immediate access to further support.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage of the registered childcare provision, inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage for the registered provision	2

## 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.**



14 March 2012

Dear Children

### **Inspection of Bellfield Infant School (NC), Birmingham, B31 1PT**

Thank you for talking to us and telling us about your school. The things you told us helped us to find out exactly what is good about it and how it can be even better. Your mums, dads, grandparents and all the others who look after you can be very proud of how well you behave and how kind you are to each other. You told us that you like school a lot, and we can see why. You go to a good school where you learn lots of new things more quickly than we often see.

Your school is an exciting place to attend. You told us all about the brilliant things you learn to do for yourselves. We saw how well you concentrate and especially how well you work together to solve problems. Some of you do not always come to school as often as you could, so miss out on some of the best bits. We have asked the teachers to check more quickly with your parents and carers to find out why you are not in school, and to encourage them to send you whenever possible.

We have asked your teachers to make sure that you always have things to do in your reading lessons that help you to learn to read new words, and that they write down what you need to learn to read next in your reading diaries. This will help you to learn as quickly in reading as you are learning in writing and mathematics. You can help by telling your teachers if you are finding words difficult to read. Some of you find learning more difficult than others. We have asked your teachers to find out exactly what extra help you need and make sure you get it.

Your school is getting better and better. The headteacher who is looking after the school at the moment has made sure that everyone is trying to improve all the time.

With all my very best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

David Driscoll  
Lead inspector

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