

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Bellfield Infant School (NC)

Vineyard Road, Birmingham, West Midlands B31 1PT

Inspection dates:

22 and 23 October 2024

Outcome

Bellfield Infant School (NC) has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a warm welcome at this nurturing school. Staff are vigilant and notice if pupils need a helping hand or a kind word to make them feel secure and ready to learn. Smiles are everywhere because pupils feel safe and happy and want to do their best.

Pupils' behaviour is very positive, including in the early years. Lessons are calm and there is rarely disruption or pupils off task. There are high expectations of behaviour and positive relationships throughout the school. Playtimes are active, busy and full of fun because pupils get along. They know that any problems will be addressed quickly by adults.

The school has ambition for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Those with SEND are carefully supported to access and succeed in the curriculum. Work in books illustrates the care pupils take and that the quality of their work matches their positive attitudes.

Parents and carers appreciate the work of the school. They are well informed and have regular opportunities to speak with teachers, leaders and pastoral staff. The school has worked hard with parents to reduce pupil absence, but some pupils are still missing too much school.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school has maintained the standards at the last inspection. This is because regular checks have been made to establish what is working well and what needs to improve. The school makes use of external experts and acts quickly to follow advice. There has been a

significant change in teaching staff in recent months and, despite this, leaders at all levels have been successful in maintaining and developing school policy and practice.

Learning phonics has a high priority. This starts with daily phonics lessons for children in Reception. The school has made sure that staff are experts by providing effective training and support. A consistent, effective approach helps pupils progress towards becoming fluent readers. Teachers know exactly which sounds pupils can and cannot read because they check understanding regularly. If pupils struggle, staff provide extra help quickly. Those in Year 2 who did not meet the phonics screening threshold at the end of Year 1 are doing well because of their ongoing phonics lessons.

Pupils get many chances to apply their English knowledge and skills. Across the curriculum, they are asked to talk and write about their learning. They do this with care and a developing accuracy. In mathematics too, daily recall and fluency sessions are helping pupils gain a secure knowledge of the key number facts they need when solving problems. This focus on securing basic skills in the curriculum is standing pupils in good stead for future learning.

The school has adopted a curriculum that sets out in detail the knowledge that pupils will learn from the time they start in the early years. There are regular checks that pupils are learning the key knowledge. However, these checks are at an early stage of implementation. As a result, the school does not have a clear picture of the strengths in the curriculum.

Lessons are characterised by pupils having lots of opportunities to discuss their learning. They become effective communicators as well as becoming tolerant and accepting of the views and opinions of others. Teachers emphasise important subject vocabulary during lessons. This is successful because it is helping pupils become familiar with the language they will need to know in later lessons.

Despite being so young, pupils gain a clear picture of the different subjects they learn. They know that history is the study of the past and that geography is learning about continents, maps and oceans. A range of carefully chosen visits and visitors are used to enhance the curriculum and bring learning to life. For instance, when learning about the Romans, pupils recreate a Roman invasion.

The personal, social and health education curriculum provides pupils with an understanding of themselves and of others. They learn about different faiths and about the importance of fairness and equality. They contribute actively to school life by becoming lunchtime leaders, playground buddies and school councillors.

The school has developed a positive staff culture. Leaders at all levels are considerate of staff's workload and well-being, which is thoroughly appreciated. Staff understand and share the vision for the school and embrace changes positively. The happiness of pupils is mirrored by that of the staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils miss too much school and therefore miss out on learning. The school should explore further ways to engage with parents to reduce absence and persistent absence, so that pupils take advantage of the exciting learning opportunities on offer.
- In some subjects, the school's checks on the impact of the curriculum and what pupils remember are at an early stage. This means there is not a secure understanding of how effectively the curriculum is impacting on pupils' learning. The school should continue to implement and refine its approach to identifying where the curriculum is successful and where it could be improved so that pupils' learning is maximised.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in March 2019.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	103289
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10336846
Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	187
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Gill Griffiths
Headteacher	Jenny Burns (acting headteacher)
Website	www.bellfield-inf.bham.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 March 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- There has been a new headteacher since the last inspection.
- An acting headteacher has been in post since April 2024.
- The governing body also runs daycare provision. This is inspected separately by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the acting headteacher, the acting deputy headteacher and other leaders.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector listened to some pupils read to school staff.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector met with the chair of the board of governors.
- The inspector spoke with a school improvement partner.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at breaktimes. He spoke formally with groups of pupils, as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around school.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including parents' free-text responses. He also took account of responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including school improvement plans, the school website and minutes from governor meetings.
- The inspector spoke to parents at the school gate.

Inspection team

Gareth Morgan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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