



Bellfield Infant NC SU School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103289
LEA Birmingham
Inspection number 276885
Inspection dates 1 February 2006 to 2 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mark Mumby HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Infant	School address	Vineyard Road
School category	Community		Birmingham
Age range of pupils	3 to 7		West Midlands B31 1PT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0121 4644855
Number on roll	164	Fax number	0121 4644854
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Lillian Tuckwell
Date of previous inspection	11 October 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Margaret Brown

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Bellfield Infant School is an average sized infant school with a nursery. It serves a disadvantaged area of Northfield. Over half of the children are eligible for free school meals. About a third of the children come from minority ethnic backgrounds but the large majority speak English as their first language. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and disabilities is about average, although the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is higher than that found nationally.

When children start in the Nursery, their knowledge and skills are below the levels expected for their age. The school provides support for children with hearing impairments through a specialist unit. The school operates a breakfast club.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with a number of good features. Significant improvements have been made recently and the school is well placed to improve further. The school has evaluated itself well and inspectors agree with all but one of its judgements. The inspectors' view is that the curriculum is satisfactory, when the school judges it as good. Parents are very pleased with the education and care provided by the school.

Although children start school with skills below those expected for their age, the majority make at least satisfactory progress. Children make a good start in the Nursery but the quality and standards in the Foundation Stage overall are satisfactory. By the time they reach the end of Year 2, most children are working at the standard expected for their age. They behave very well and approach their learning positively.

There is a significant amount of good teaching but this is not consistent throughout the school. Children are well cared for and are generally supported well with their learning. The school provides a generally satisfactory curriculum although planning in Reception is not sufficiently developed to make best use of the newly developed facilities. The enhanced information and communication technology (ICT) resources are not used well enough to support learning.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is an appropriate focus on children's learning and the school has established systems to monitor their progress. More work is needed to ensure that this information is used effectively to plan for further improvement. The governing body is not rigorous enough in holding the school to account for the quality of children's learning. School improvement planning lacks precision, which is likely to make it difficult to monitor developments sufficiently well.

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection and recent improvements indicate that the school has a good capacity to improve further. The school offers satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on the good teaching to ensure that the best practice is developed and disseminated in order to provide consistently high quality learning experiences for all of the children.
- Develop further the planning in the Foundation Stage to ensure that each area of learning is appropriately addressed and best use is made of the recently improved indoor and outdoor facilities.
- Make more effective use of ICT to enrich the learning opportunities for all children.
- Make school improvement planning more precise in order to enable the school's leaders, managers and governors to evaluate rigorously the work of the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Overall, achievement is satisfactory. Children enter the Nursery with skills below those expected for their age. They make a very good start in the Nursery and, by the time they reach their Reception Year, most of the more able children have caught up. At the time of the inspection, most children in Year 1 were working at the level expected of their age in reading, writing and mathematics.

Through Year 1 and Year 2 the children make satisfactory progress, particularly in literacy. By the end of Year 2, the majority of children reach the standard expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the progress seen in lessons was variable and not all children made as much progress as they could have done. The more able children generally meet the challenging targets set by the school. However, a significant number of the children of average ability do not meet their targets.

Boys generally make better progress than girls. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children's personal development is a strength. Children are enthusiastic about school. From their early days in the Foundation Stage, they are considerate to others and relate confidently to adults. Their moral, social and cultural development is good. Spiritual development is satisfactory. The school has made satisfactory progress in developing awareness of other faiths and cultures.

Children have good attitudes to learning. Most work well independently and in groups. For example, small groups of Year 1 pupils sustained good levels of attention in a mathematics lesson when evaluating which objects balance others. The children maintain concentration, even when the pace of teaching flags. They behave well around school and in the playground. The children have very few concerns about bullying and the school monitors any incidents rigorously.

Sound provision for basic literacy and numeracy ensures that pupils are well placed for later education. The school encourages children to follow a healthy lifestyle. This is reinforced well through displays, activities such as health week and the good quality of school meals. The active school council enables children to influence the life of the school. Attendance is carefully monitored and absences are systematically investigated. Largely through the hard work of the learning mentor, attendance has improved significantly and is now broadly average. Punctuality is good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. A significant amount of good teaching was seen during the inspection, but this was not consistent throughout the school. Teaching assistants work well and help individuals and groups of children to make good progress.

Where teaching is good, teachers have a clear understanding of what they want the children to learn. They plan work that enthuses and challenges the individual children in the class because they use their subject knowledge well. They ask questions that make children think and teach children to use appropriate vocabulary. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, the teacher used a variety of practical methods and the children responded enthusiastically. Individual children were asked questions to confirm their understanding and the lesson moved on at a brisk pace.

Where teaching is less effective, it is often slow and repetitive. Teachers do not always assess children's learning well enough and have an insufficient understanding of what children already know and can do. This results in children being given work that is too easy or too hard.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. In the main, it provides a broad range of opportunities and experience for children. However, while there has been significant improvement in resources for ICT recently, not enough use is made of these to improve the quality of teaching or to extend pupils' learning. Literacy skills are developed effectively across the curriculum, although cross-curricular use of mathematics is less well developed. Although provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, the curriculum in Reception is not organised to reflect fully the six areas of learning. Outdoor play is not yet planned for appropriately.

Children with hearing impairments are well cared for and have access to the full curriculum. They are effectively integrated into the life of the school.

The curriculum is enriched by a satisfactory programme of extra-curricular activities including football, netball, dance and drumming. A good programme of outside visits and of visitors to the school adds to children's enjoyment of learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Relationships between staff and pupils are a significant strength. The quality of care, particularly when children enter the Foundation Stage, and for children in the hearing unit, is good. As a result, pupils feel very secure and confident that adults will support them when needed. Risk assessments are carried

out as required and the school works hard to ensure that the environment is always safe. The school has satisfactory procedures for child protection.

Children's individual targets in English contribute effectively to continued improvement. However, children are less aware of their mathematics targets and these are not reviewed sufficiently often to help them to improve. The marking of work has improved since the last inspection and, particularly in Year 1, is often very thorough, giving good pointers for improvement. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities and those learning English as an additional language receive effective support.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has been in post for only one term but has already established a clear vision for school improvement. The school is beginning to monitor its work systematically and is building up a good range of evidence about its performance. This has been used to prepare a school improvement plan, which sets clear targets for development. However, the criteria outlined to measure progress are very broad and the timescale for improvement is imprecise. This is likely to make it difficult for the school to evaluate the progress it is making.

The school has assigned teachers to lead the development of individual subjects. These teachers provide a good level of support for their colleagues and are increasingly successful in bringing about improvements in children's learning. However, they are less effective in monitoring the impact of their improvement work and providing evaluative feedback for the staff as a whole and for governors. As a result, good teaching is only happening in some classes and areas of the curriculum.

The governing body meets regularly and has established a number of committees to carry out aspects of its work. The headteacher provides detailed information to the governing body about the school's work. However, this is not sufficiently focused on children's learning and the governing body is not rigorous enough in challenging this. As a result, it is difficult for the governing body to hold the school to account.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Dear Children

Thank you for making Mr Logan and me welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work. You are all very polite, cheerful and helpful. We liked the way that you are all seemed to get on so well with each other.

We were very pleased to see how hard you all work in your lessons and you were very good at telling us about what you were doing. Most of your lessons that we visited were exciting and you were learning a lot. We have asked your teachers to make sure that all of your lessons are like this.

Your school building is very nice and you have got a lot of new things, such as computers and special places to learn outside. Your teachers have worked hard to make your school like this and we have asked them to make sure that they use all of these things well to help you to learn even more.

Your school has changed a lot recently and I am sure you will all be very pleased about the things that have got better. We have asked the people that are in charge of your school to make sure that they plan all of their work very carefully and always check to see if the changes have made things better.

Yours sincerely

Mark Mumby Her Majesty's Inspector