

# Byron Court Primary School

## Inspection report

---

Unique Reference Number	101497
Local Authority	Brent
Inspection number	323467
Inspection dates	13–14 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Jane Wotherspoon HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

---

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	543
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Lawrence Safir
Headteacher	Mr Timothy Jones and Miss Anita Samani
Date of previous school inspection	03 July 2006
School address	Spencer Road Wembley HA0 3SF
Telephone number	020 8904 2785
Fax number	020 8908 2447
Email address	admin@byroncrt.brent.sch.uk

---

Age group	5–11
Inspection date(s)	13–14 May 2009
Inspection number	323467

---

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 20 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school development plan, the school's data on pupils' attainment and progress, a range of policy documents, and samples of pupils' work. The team received 164 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the extent to which previous weaknesses in provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage have been addressed so that children can achieve well
- what the school's tracking information shows about the pupils' current levels of attainment and the progress they make over time
- whether teaching and the curriculum are sufficiently well adapted to meet the needs of all groups of pupils, particularly those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and higher-attaining pupils
- whether provision for pupils in the early stages of learning English has improved since the last inspection
- the impact of changes to the leadership structure on clarity of direction and drive for improvement.

## Information about the school

The school is much larger than average. It has more boys than girls with a noticeable imbalance in some year groups. A broadly average proportion of pupils are entitled to take free school meals. The school serves a very diverse population in terms of its cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds. A high proportion of pupils do not speak English as their first language and some are in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than average. The movement of pupils into and out of the school is a little higher than that found in most schools. A small number of pupils are looked after by foster carers.

Since the last inspection, there have been some staff changes. Since September 2008, the school has been led by two co-headteachers: the previously long-serving headteacher continues in the role for three days a week and the deputy headteacher takes the role for the other two days.

An after school club, Kidz Club, operates from the school site each afternoon. This provision is not managed by the governing body and has been inspected separately.

## Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

3

Capacity for sustained improvement

3

### Main findings

Byron Court Primary is a satisfactory school. Pupils achieve satisfactorily during their time in the school and currently reach standards that are broadly average or, in the case of mathematics, a little above average by the time they leave school. At present, pupils' learning and progress is satisfactory but a little uneven. Progress accelerates towards the end of Key Stage 2 where the quality of teaching is better. Such good teaching is not widespread enough to ensure that pupils consistently make good progress. In particular, not all teachers always plan activities precisely enough to meet the wide-ranging needs of pupils in their classes.

Staff are caring and committed to the welfare of pupils. A positive ethos underpins strong relationships between pupils and results in a high level of racial harmony; racist incidents are practically unheard of. Behaviour is good, with only occasional lapses in quality, and was exemplary during assembly. Bullying is rare, and pupils feel that any incidents are dealt with by staff. Pupils are polite, courteous and considerate to others. They enjoy school a good deal and talk enthusiastically about the good range of after school activities. Many take advantage of the wide range of sporting opportunities which raise their awareness of keeping fit as part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. These sporting opportunities also promote good teamwork.

Action to overcome weaknesses identified at the last inspection has had some success. Provision in the Reception classes has improved with the development of an outdoor area and better planning. Strengths in the pastoral provision have been sustained. Systems for tracking pupils' attainment and progress are currently being strengthened by plotting pupils' progress termly rather than annually. However, there is scope to use this data better to judge whether or not the school's actions for improvement have had the intended effect and to set more challenging targets for individual pupils. Reorganisation within the leadership team is presenting opportunities to spread responsibility for leading developments more widely. Staff with leadership responsibility are developing their roles in evaluating aspects of provision and identifying what needs to improve. This gives the school a satisfactory capacity to continue improving.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory, but which have areas of underperformance, will receive a monitoring visit by an

Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Increase the proportion of good and better teaching to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress by:
  - ensuring that teachers use assessment information consistently to plan and adapt activities to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities
  - sharing existing good practice in marking and feedback to pupils so that they know precisely what they need to do to improve their work.
  
- Sharpen systems for monitoring what the school does well and what needs to improve and for evaluating the impact of its policies and actions by:
  - making more robust analysis of data on pupils' attainment and progress over time to set them increasingly challenging targets
  - involving leaders at all levels, including governors, in the process
  - regularly seeking and incorporating the views of parents.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3
---

Pupils make satisfactory progress overall. They have positive attitudes to learning and work hard in lessons. They sustain a good level of concentration and effort, even when they have been given tasks that are not stimulating or not pitched at quite the right level to meet their needs. Pupils take pride in their work, which is presented neatly. No particular group stands out as doing much better or much worse than any other in the long term. Any variations in pupils' progress relates to their experiences in particular classes rather than to their gender, background or ethnic group. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities were seen to make good progress during lessons when they had support from a teaching assistant or when they were withdrawn from class for short-focused teaching. Such support contributed much to their attitudes, confidence and self-esteem. Similarly, those at the early stages of learning to speak English make good progress during short sessions of focused teaching. When such support is not available in class, their progress is more variable and dependent on the extent to which activities have been modified.

Pupils' speaking and listening skills are good and they are developing good skills in using computers by the end of Key Stage 2. Results in National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science have fallen in the last three years from the high of 2006 to a broadly average position in 2008. Results in mathematics remained above average but in English were slightly below average. Indications from current work and the school's predictions suggest a similar picture is likely this year. Writing is a weaker element that the school is still working hard to improve.

Pupils are developing the personal and social qualities, as well as the basic skills, that will help them in the next stage of their education. They have a good understanding of personal safety. The oldest, for example, have a very well developed awareness of internet safety. Pupils give ideas on how to improve the school and its community to their class representatives on the school council and feel that they are listened to.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	3
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	3
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	2
How well do pupils behave?	2
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	2
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	2
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	2

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching is not consistent across the school. This variability is the main factor in determining the rate at which pupils make progress. At its very best, teaching capitalises on pupils' enthusiasm, promotes excitement in learning and offers opportunities to use their skills across subjects. Although there is much that is good, too much teaching offers mundane activities and/or makes too little concession to pupils' different starting points. Teachers do not consistently use what they know about pupils from assessing their work to plan activities more precisely. This is especially so in subjects other than English and mathematics where lesson planning is often scant. At times, teachers simply expect pupils to complete different amounts of similar work. However some pupils need more support or a simpler task, while others need a greater level of challenge. By and large, pupils are managed well. One consistent feature is teachers' high expectations of the quality of presentation of pupils' written work. A feature that is improving, following staff training, is the marking of pupils' work. Although variable between subjects, the marking of pupils' writing is generally helpful. Some is exemplary and leaves pupils in no doubt about what they need to do better next time. Half-termly assessments of pupils' writing are thorough and set clear 'next steps' for pupils to follow.

Traditionally, all subjects have been planned and taught in blocks of time. The school is developing a more creative approach to planning the curriculum by linking work in different subjects to make learning more meaningful and exciting. Where this has been tried it has been successful, but it is not yet firmly established across the school. The school does not have a register of pupils who are gifted and talented. Nor does it provide a programme of activities for such pupils. A good range of visits, visitors, and clubs extends the breadth of activities on offer. As at the last inspection, music continues to make a strong contribution to pupils' self-esteem and cultural

---

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

development.

Pupils are well supported in their personal development. They feel safe and confident that they always have someone to talk to should they have any concerns. The pastoral support and care for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable is very good. Work with outside agencies ensures that pupils who are experiencing difficulties are well supported and can make at least satisfactory progress in their learning and development. New pupils, including those arriving from other countries and speaking little English, are welcomed warmly. As a result, they settle quickly, make friends, and make good progress in learning new vocabulary.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

The quality of teaching	3
The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

## How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership is sound. Through monitoring the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes, leaders have identified appropriate priorities for improvement. They have set out a range of suitable actions in the annual development plan. The plan lacks clear procedures for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the action taken. Senior staff give feedback to teachers on how to improve. Staff training has, rightly, focused on improving the accuracy of assessment and the quality of planning but this is yet to have the desired impact on raising the overall quality of teaching.

The school's satisfactory system for tracking pupils' attainment and progress ensures that pupils who slip behind are identified and given additional support. Statutory targets are reasonably challenging but there is no whole-school approach to setting individual targets to raise pupils' awareness of what they should be aiming to achieve.

Many governors are new and still developing their role in challenging the school about its performance. They provide satisfactory support, for example, in financial and building matters. Policies and procedures for keeping pupils safe are sound. Satisfactory child protection procedures, safeguarding arrangements and risk assessments are in place. The school's commitment to equalities is evident in pupils' outcomes and the opportunities they have to participate in all that the school provides. In practice, the school does much to promote community cohesion through its ethos and through the experiences it provides for its diverse community of pupils. There is more to do to strengthen work on communities beyond the school. Governors are not rigorous enough in evaluating the impact of their statutory policies and duties. They do not systematically gather the views of parents.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

## Early Years Foundation Stage

On the whole, most children start school with skills, knowledge and understanding that are broadly typical for their age. However, the ability range is wide and children have had very different kinds of pre-school experiences. Most children reach the goals expected for their age by the end of the year, having made sound progress from their different starting points. Teaching is good when the adults are working with groups of children on focused activities. The linking of sounds and letters is taught well and children are beginning to write labels and simple sentences. However, some missed opportunities for adults to intervene in the activities that children choose for themselves mean that chances to extend learning are lost. Children are well behaved, happy learners. Good relationships, care and support help them to settle quickly into school routines and encourage children to ‘have a go’ at new experiences.

The leader has helped to secure good improvements in the quality of planning and the outdoor accommodation since the last inspection. She has a clear view of what needs to be developed further. There is scope to make more frequent use of outdoor learning as an extension of the small classrooms. Good home-school books give parents helpful guidance on how they can support their child’s learning at home. Regular observations and assessments of children are collated into individual profiles. This new system is working well. As yet, there is no clear tracking of groups of children and this makes it difficult for the leader to assess the overall progress they make as they move through the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3



## Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents responding to the inspection questionnaire were pleased with the school's work. However, a significant minority noted some areas that could be improved. Parents are clear that their children enjoy school. A number of parents consider that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour, including bullying. Inspectors observed little behaviour that was unacceptable and much that was good. Pupils feel that any bullying has been resolved satisfactorily by adults. Inspectors share parents' reservations about the canteen; it is not a pleasant environment. Governors continue to investigate how it can be improved. Several parents were not wholly positive about how well the school informs them of their child's progress or how well they are supported to help their child at home. Inspectors agree that there is more that the school could do to seek parents' views on such matters.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Byron Court Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. If a parent has more than one child at the school, we ask them to record an answer against all the questions, for each of their children.

The inspection team received 164 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 423 parents and carers registered at the school.

	Always	Most of the time	Occasionally	Never
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	68	80	15	4

## 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. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
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. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, training or development. This may refer to the acquisition of skills, knowledge, understanding or desired attributes. Attributes include qualities or personal competencies which are important to the development of the pupil; for example personal, social, cultural, emotional or health.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.



1 June 2009

Dear Pupils

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

My colleagues and I were delighted to meet you when we inspected your school. What polite and courteous young people you are! Thank you to those of you who came to meet us to tell us your views of the school. We have judged your school as satisfactory overall. However, there are many good things about it.

We were pleased to see how well you behave. Your positive attitudes and willingness to work hard help you to learn. You told us that you all get along well together most of the time. We could see that for ourselves. Your strong relationships with each other and the way you help each other mean that school is a caring place. You say that you like school but that the canteen is not very nice and we agree.

It is good that you feel safe in school and that you are confident that there is always someone who will help you if you have a problem. Staff look after you well. Many of you attend the sports clubs or belong to the sports teams that do so well in local competitions. These help you keep fit and healthy as well as help you to develop teamwork.

We were pleased to see that you get the chance to give your views on how the school could be improved through discussions with your school council representatives. It is also good that you think of others beyond the school when raising funds for charities.

We think that some of you could be doing even better and so we have asked the teachers to improve the way they plan different activities for you in class, and the way they tell you what you need to improve next. Also, we want staff and governors to make sure they check how well you are doing so that you can be set increasingly challenging targets.

I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Jane Wotherspoon  
Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).