

Bellefield Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135484
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	329102
Inspection dates	3–4 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Martin James

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	246
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Goldstone
Headteacher	Steve Wigley
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Windermere Road Trowbridge BA14 8TE
Telephone number	01225 753530

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	3–4 February 2009
Inspection number	329102

Fax number

01225 719050

Age group	3-11
Inspection dates	3-4 February 2009
Inspection number	329102

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: 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

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is similar in size to most primary schools. The number of pupils for whom English is not their first language is broadly average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average, as is the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of Nursery and Reception classes, and a small number of reception age children are integrated into a class with Year 1 pupils. In recognition of its work the school has received the Healthy Schools, Active Mark for Sport and Football Association Charter Mark awards.

The school was opened in January 2008 as the result of the amalgamation of the Margaret Stancomb Infants School and the Parochial Church of England Junior School. For the first 12 months the school remained on the two sites, under the leadership of the current deputy headteacher. The schools combined onto the one site in January 2009, at which point the new headteacher took up his post.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory. It also has some particular strengths. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, and their social skills are well developed. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good, and they show much enjoyment in coming to school. Whilst care, guidance and support are good overall, pastoral care is outstanding. Parents hold overwhelmingly positive views about the school, and they support it very well. One said, typically, 'I am very pleased with my children's education at Bellefield School', and another added, 'My daughter cannot wait to get to school in the morning.'

When children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage their knowledge and skills are well below those typically expected. They achieve well, and by the end of Reception standards are below average. Pupils then make satisfactory progress through Years 1 to 6, and by the end of Year 6 standards remain just below average. Writing is the weakest area of pupils' work. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make sound progress.

Teachers relate well to pupils. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and teaching assistants are well deployed in supporting pupils where there is a need. Lessons are well planned for the age ranges present in classes, but limited challenge is sometimes provided in the work given to more able pupils. Much well directed advice is given to pupils in class, but comments in books and the targets provided for them do not always give the pupils a clear understanding of how to improve their work. Pupils benefit from the range of visits, visitors and after-school clubs that enrich the curriculum, and they show a clear understanding of the importance of healthy eating, keeping safe and taking regular exercise. The curriculum is enhanced through the careful use of cross-curricular links, designed to make it more interesting and, especially, to help develop writing skills. However, it is too early yet to see the impact of this work in test results for writing.

The deputy headteacher and other staff members and governors have worked hard, and with considerable success, to amalgamate the two previous schools and oversee the extensive building work that has taken place. Together with the new headteacher they have also accurately identified areas for further development, especially in relation to the progress that pupils make. Current planning shows a clear awareness of the ways to take the school forward and, with sound leadership and management, the school demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because they are taught well. The children are happy in school and they enjoy themselves. Their behaviour is good, although occasionally a very small number find it difficult to maintain concentration on the tasks they have chosen. The staff work hard to create a friendly and very caring learning environment, in common with the rest of the school, and the children also benefit from the good links that are established with parents. In particular, the promotion of children's welfare in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. Adults provide the children with a good balance between teacher-led activities and chances for them to choose for themselves, and they take every opportunity to help them develop their various skills. Adults frequently talk to the children, and the good range of reading and writing activities helps to tackle weaknesses in literacy skills.

A good range of resources is provided, with the outdoor area being used effectively in all areas of the curriculum. The leader uses her specialist knowledge and enthusiasm well in making suitable provision for the children, and other staff members support her well in providing for their various needs.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers consistently provide challenge in the work given to pupils, especially those who are more able.
- Ensure that marking and the process of setting targets help pupils understand clearly how to improve their work.

A small proportion of 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.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are below average, and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, although by the end of Reception few children achieve average standards, especially in aspects of literacy. Pupils make satisfactory progress through Years 1 and 2, with standards remaining just below average by the end of Year 2. Overall, pupils do least well in writing.

By the end of Year 6, although the standard of pupils' performance in writing remains lower than in other subjects, overall standards continue to be just below average. This represents satisfactory achievement through Years 3 to 6. In 2008, boys in Year 6 did not perform quite as well as the girls. The school recognised this, and the strategies introduced to address the issue have been successful, with current class work showing boys and girls to be performing similarly. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and this is helping them to make satisfactory progress towards their targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are polite and friendly, and they freely express their views about their work and school life. They behave well and show respect for each other, their teachers and the environment. Pupils feel safe in school, and they say that bullying is not a problem. They enjoy their lessons and show this by their attentiveness and positive work ethic. The school has been proactive in promoting attendance, which has improved over recent months and is now satisfactory. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay healthy. They eat fruit and healthy meals, and they readily take part in physical exercise opportunities. They know how to adopt safe practices, for example when using computers. Pupils contribute well to both the school and the wider community, and they participate actively in a wide range of activities in the local area. The school council enables pupils to gain an insight into the responsibilities of adult life, as well as giving the pupils a voice in the school. Satisfactory achievement in literacy and numeracy ensures pupils are being adequately prepared for their next stage in education and their future life at work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers generally provide interesting lessons for pupils, using a good range of resources and strategies. Classes are well managed and relationships are a strength. As a result, pupils are well behaved, keen to learn and ready to work hard. Teachers' explanations are usually clear although, on occasions, introductions lack pace and this results in some loss of concentration by the pupils. Teachers make good use of the interactive whiteboards to motivate pupils and develop their understanding. For example, clear graphics were used effectively in a mathematics lesson in Year 2. Teaching assistants are well deployed to promote learning, especially that of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This ensures they are able to join in all class activities and make steady progress. Teachers plan a range of work for the different ages and abilities in their classes. However, they do not always provide work that is challenging enough for more able pupils, so that their knowledge and skills are not fully extended during the lesson.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum enables pupils to study a broad range of subjects and topics. In particular good links are being made between subjects, especially involving the use of literacy, as the school rightly recognised the need to address weaknesses in pupils' writing skills. This makes learning more exciting and meaningful for the pupils, as well as providing opportunities for them to practise those writing skills. A good example is the use of a topic on the Vikings in Year 5/6, where improvements in writing are evident. Planning makes appropriate allowance for the different age groups present in classes. However, similar allowance is not always made for the different needs of more-able pupils. The extensive grounds are used well, in science for example, and the provision of French further enhances provision.

There is a good emphasis throughout the school on developing pupils' personal and social skills. The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' safe and healthy lifestyles. There is a good range of outings, visitors and after-school activities that pupils appreciate, and which contributes well to their enjoyment of school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The welfare of the pupils is at the heart of the school's work, and adults ensure that there is outstanding pastoral care. Parents in turn speak highly of the provision the school makes for their children. Good use is made of outside bodies in supporting the care of pupils when a need is identified, and children and their families benefit greatly from the support they receive in the Children's Centre. Safeguarding procedures are robust, and staff promote a safe, secure and clean environment. Safety checks and risk assessments are rigorously carried out. Pupils are taught about the importance of healthy living, and they are regularly reminded of the need to take care, for instance when doing physical education.

Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but, whilst they often add words of praise, they rarely provide pupils with advice about improving their work. Pupils have targets for improving their work. However, discussions suggest that they do not always have a clear understanding of these and what they need to do to make their work better.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The new headteacher leads the school with enthusiasm and a clear commitment to improvement, especially in relation to the progress pupils make. In this he receives strong support from the deputy headteacher. Staff have been successful in creating a safe and caring environment, and good care is also taken to ensure that no form of discrimination is evident in the school. The school has satisfactory systems for finding out how well it is doing, and their self-review is largely accurate in identifying strengths and areas for development. For example, the school correctly identifies its overall effectiveness as satisfactory, and the current initiative on employing cross-curricular links, to benefit writing skills in particular, is a well chosen priority. However, in evaluating teaching, not enough consideration has been given to the progress the pupils are making when reaching a judgement. Community cohesion and pupils' understanding of cultural diversity are developed well. There are strong community links both in school and locally, and the school has successfully enhanced these through links made with schools in other parts of England and in France.

Subject leaders generally demonstrate a secure understanding of the strengths in their various subjects. Those for English, mathematics and science have actively initiated and supported strategies for making improvements, although they have not always ensured that planning provides enough challenge for pupils. At present, leaders of other subjects have more limited opportunities to carry out monitoring activities, to help them identify areas for possible improvement. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are fully involved, for example, in producing the school development plan, and they have been very involved in overseeing the amalgamation of the two schools. They are currently developing their role through a programme of school and classroom visits, to further improve their overall awareness of the new school's provision, and in order to be able to hold the school more readily to account for its performance.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

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

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

5 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Bellefield Primary and Nursery School, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 8TE

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. We enjoyed our visit and we enjoyed talking to you. My colleague especially liked talking to the school council, and we really enjoyed joining you in lessons and in assembly. I am writing to tell you what we found out about the school, what we think is good, and what we think could be made better. Overall, you are in a satisfactory school, where you are making steady progress with your work. The headteacher and other staff know what they need to do to make the school better.

These are some of the strengths of the school.

- Teachers provide you with lessons which you enjoy.
- Your behaviour and your attitudes to your work are good.
- You know about how important it is to eat healthy food and take exercise.
- The staff know you well and take very great care of you.
- Your parents are very pleased with the school.

These are things the school has been asked to improve.

- Make sure that you all get work in lessons that suits you and is hard enough for you.
- Make sure that the targets you have, and the comments teachers add when marking your books, help you understand clearly how to improve your work.

You can help too, by making sure you know how to make your work better.

We wish you all good luck for the future.

Best wishes

Martin James

Lead inspector