

Bellfield Junior NC SU School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103291
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	336049
Inspection dates	23–24 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Gerald Griffin

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	188
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs S Dore
Headteacher	Miss T M Cameron
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2007
School address	Vineyard Road Northfield Birmingham
Telephone number	0121 464 2895
Fax number	0121 464 2892
Email address	enquiry@bellfield-jun.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons and held meetings with groups of pupils, staff, governors and some parents. They observed the school's work, looked at progress records, teachers' lesson plans, school improvement plans, policies and reports. They analysed 93 pupils' questionnaires, 17 staff questionnaires and 23 parents' questionnaires, and undertook a case study of several pupils whose circumstances have the potential to make them vulnerable.

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

- the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- learning and progress in English and science
- the quality of the challenge that teachers provide to secure good progress in all subjects
- provision for pupils who do not speak English at home as their first language
- the effectiveness of leaders' plans, for example to improve teaching, to accelerate progress and secure better attainment.

Information about the school

Bellfield Junior NC SU School is smaller than average. It includes a small number of pupils in a special unit for those with a hearing impairment. Most pupils are White British. Other pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. Most of them do not speak English at home as their first language and a small proportion are at the early stages of acquiring the language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with a statement of special educational needs are greater than average. The school has gained a series of awards, including the Basic Skills Agency quality mark, a Healthy Schools Award, a leading aspect award for science, Education and Business Partnership awards for Primary Enterprise, an award for working in partnership with parents and two awards for physical education provision.

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

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Bellfield Primary School provides a satisfactory quality of education within a welcoming, safe and caring atmosphere. The inspection found that:

- pupils' attainment is average and their achievement is satisfactory
- the learning and progress of pupils are satisfactory overall and improving, especially in science
- pupils feel safe and secure in school and their behaviour is good
- pupils enjoy many aspects of school and their attendance is above average
- teaching is typically satisfactory, but better in science
- the curriculum is satisfactory
- all pupils, including those whose circumstances have the potential to make them vulnerable, are cared for very well
- pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities pupils and pupils who do not speak English at home as their first language receive good support
- parents are happy with the quality of education the school provides
- leadership and management are satisfactory.

Since the last inspection, the school has made good progress in tackling the underachievement of some of the more able pupils. The drive to improve attendance has been most effective. Provision in science has improved and pupils' progress in the subject is now good. These successes, combined with broadly accurate self-evaluation, mean that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

There are three key areas in which the school is not fully effective.

Teaching is not yet consistently good or better because the pace of learning in lessons is not always quick enough to ensure pupils are working hard and make good progress. Furthermore, teachers do not all provide enough opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their learning by, for example, choosing topics, planning research and deciding how they present their work so that they become effective independent learners.

The curriculum is satisfactory rather than good because the work it provides is not consistently interesting enough to engage pupils well and accelerate their learning. Also, the way pupils are encouraged to contribute to the school community by taking real responsibility is relatively weak. For example, the school council is not regularly consulted about pupils' views on learning and the curriculum.

Leaders do not consistently evaluate the information the school has on pupils' attainment, progress and the quality of teaching in enough detail to judge the success of improvement plans and to identify where further gains can be made.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching so it is consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring that learning proceeds at a demanding pace so that pupils are fully stretched
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their work so that they become effective independent learners.
- Improve the curriculum by:
 - providing interesting and relevant work that consistently engages pupils well in accelerating their progress
 - providing pupils with good opportunities to take responsibility to improve their contribution to the school community.
- Strengthen school improvement planning by ensuring that leaders use data rigorously to check the success of action plans and to pinpoint areas where the school can become better.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspection before their next Section 5 Inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The lessons observed during the inspection were all at least satisfactory and some were good. Learning and progress were satisfactory overall and standards broadly average. Learning and progress in English and mathematics are satisfactory overall but they are good in science, where teaching is of higher quality. In a good numeracy lesson, an inspector saw pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learning well and making good progress in using a ruler to measure accurately the length of objects. The well-informed help each pupil received from adults was particularly effective in meeting their particular needs and accelerating their progress. Later in the lesson, pupils checked each others' work, which reinforced their understanding of the need to be accurate when measuring. In a less effective history lesson, the teacher over-directed the lesson, which meant pupils were not able to choose activities that really interested them and develop ideas independently. As a result, learning and progress were satisfactory.

Most pupils' achievement, including that of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who do not speak English at home as their first language, is satisfactory. The small number of pupils whose circumstances have the potential to make them vulnerable achieve in line with their peers. Pupils with hearing impairment make good progress overall because of the specialist individual help they receive.

The rare cases of bullying are quickly resolved by the school. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe when crossing the road or cycling but older pupils' knowledge of how to keep safe on the internet is less well established. Most pupils choose a healthy diet and take plenty of exercise. They have a good

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understanding of the dangers of drugs, smoking and alcohol abuse. Pupils collect very generously for charity and many take part in events in the local community. Some older pupils said they would like to take have responsibility in school, for example by helping younger pupils. Inspectors found that pupils readily acted as monitors and as members of the school council but opportunities to accept responsibility that is more challenging were too limited for some older pupils. Pupils have positive attitudes towards school and learning. All pupils undertake a mini enterprise that provides them with a valuable insight into commerce and money management. However, average attainment and the underdeveloped independent learning skills of many pupils mean their preparation for secondary school and later life is no better than satisfactory.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They reflect maturely on their own feelings and the feelings of others. A strong moral code underpins pupils' good behaviour. A few fidget when they have to spend too long listening to the teacher talk. They co-operate well in teams and readily share apparatus. Pupils have a deep respect for people from backgrounds different to their own.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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There are many signs that teaching is improving. Relationships in lessons are positive and pupils are keen to learn. In well-taught lessons, learning proceeds at a lively pace and pupils are challenged well, kept busy and work hard. This is the case in most science lessons. Where teaching is less effective, the rate of learning and progress is more measured because, for example, the teacher talks for too long, which means pupils' learning is too passive. Not all teachers plan enough opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their learning so that they become confident independent learners. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the learning of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those at the early stages of acquiring English. The school has worked hard to improve the quality of marking. It is now consistently providing pupils with a clear understanding of how they can improve their work to reach their challenging targets. However, it is too early to see if this is having a significant impact on accelerating pupils' progress.

The curriculum supports some aspects of pupils' personal development well. For example, good opportunities to reflect on dilemmas in lively assemblies are promoting pupils' good spiritual development. Exciting work in science really interests pupils and contributes to their good progress. Work in some other lessons does not engage pupils as well because it lacks relevance or is too theoretical, and as a result, pupils do not tackle tasks with the enthusiasm needed to accelerate their progress. A wide range of well-supported sports and other clubs and educational visits broaden pupils' horizons, raise their aspirations and add to their enjoyment of school.

Adults use their detailed knowledge of each child expertly to provide a high level of pastoral care. Pupils readily turn to an adult if they have a worry, knowing their concerns will be quickly and effectively resolved. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive sensitive support that ensures they take full part in school life. The needs of pupils at the early stages of learning English are assessed accurately and effective programmes of support ensure they rapidly develop skills in the language. The school's targeted support for pupils whose circumstances have the potential to make them vulnerable is very effective and ensures they settle quickly into the school's routines, gain confidence and behave very well. The school's work with parents is increasingly effective. For example, attendance has risen because of its successful support for families whose children had a poor attendance record.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
	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?

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The staff share enthusiastically the headteacher's drive to improve the school. Leaders check the work of the school regularly and this provides them with a reasonably accurate picture of the quality of education the school provides. The school reviews pupils' progress towards their challenging targets appropriately and provides effective support if their progress slows so that they can catch up missed work. Governors support the school well and have an improving grasp of data. They are beginning to use this to challenge the school robustly over the quality of education it provides. In science, leaders evaluate the quality of lessons and progress data effectively to judge successes and plan improvements. For example, following the analysis of test results that showed low marks in practical work, they provided training to sharpen staff skills in planning experiments. Recent tests show a marked improvement in the scores for practical work. However, this quality of evaluation is not the consistent picture and leaders do not always use the data they collect on progress, the quality of lessons, and feedback from pupils effectively to highlight success and pinpoint precisely the areas of the school in need of further improvement.

Child protection procedures are robust and of high quality, and fully meet current safeguarding requirements. The checks that the school makes on the suitability of adults to work with children and pupils are most rigorous.

The school is thoroughly committed to ensuring equal opportunities and ensuring all pupils make good progress. The good progress of pupils with hearing impairment and their full integration into the life of the school indicates that its policies have some measure of success. However, pupils' satisfactory progress overall means that this area of the school's work is not yet fully effective.

The school has evaluated its religious, ethnic and socio-economic context thoroughly, but the contribution it makes to community cohesion is satisfactory rather than good because links with communities further afield and overseas are limited. The recent work it has undertaken in helping families to support their child's education at home is having a positive impact in school, which is a happy and harmonious community.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3

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The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

A small percentage of parents completed the questionnaire. Those that did are supportive of the school. They say the school provides a safe and caring atmosphere for their children. Typically one wrote, 'My daughter enjoys coming to school and makes steady progress. I find the teachers very supportive of her needs.' A parent of a boy with behaviour problems wrote to say how pleased she was with the programme of support provided for him by the school and the way his behaviour has improved. One carer met an inspector and said she was very impressed with the care and support the school provided. Inspectors agree with the positive statements of parents. A small minority of parents said they had concerns about how well the school met the needs of their child. Inspectors found that while the school meets most of the needs of its pupils, it is not consistently meeting their need to become effective independent learners and to take real responsibility in school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bellfield NC SU Junior School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspectors received 23 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 188 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	15	65	8	35	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	16	70	7	30	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	14	61	8	35	1	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	65	7	30	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	18	78	5	22	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	65	8	25	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	65	7	30	1	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	15	65	8	35	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	13	57	8	35	2	9	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	65	7	30	1	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	65	8	35	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	15	65	8	35	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	18	78	5	22	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for 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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



25 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bellfield Junior NC SU School, Birmingham, B31 1PT

Thank you for being so polite and friendly when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit and having the opportunity to talk to some of you and to see you in lessons and at play. I was very impressed with your enthusiastic singing in assembly. You are rightly proud of the school's happy atmosphere in which you all get on so well together. We think Bellfield is a satisfactory school. Here are some of the things we found out.

Satisfactory teaching helps you make satisfactory progress in your lessons.

Pupils in the hearing impairment unit make good progress.

Standards of attainment are average in English, mathematics and science.

You clearly enjoy school and feel safe and secure.

Your behaviour is good and your attendance is above average.

You have good relationships with your teachers and you try hard for them.

The curriculum provides you with exciting clubs and visits, which you enjoy.

Adults look after you well and are always ready to help you.

The headteacher and staff are working hard to make the school get better.

We have asked the school to do three things to help you do even better in your learning.

Make sure teachers keep you all working hard and give you more chance to plan your own work so that you make better progress.

Provide you with work in all subjects that is as exciting and relevant as the good work we saw in science.

Use a range of information, for example about your progress, to check how well the school is improving and to pinpoint where further improvements are required.

You can help the school by continuing to try your best in lessons, attending regularly and behaving well.

We wish you all success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Gerald Griffin

Lead inspector

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