

Belleville Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100998
Local Authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	285936
Inspection dates	10 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Mr Graham Lee

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

Type of School	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	621
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Sue Harries
Headteacher	Mr John Grove
Date of previous school inspection	14 January 2002
School address	Belleville Road Battersea London SW11 6PR
Telephone number	020 7228 6727
Fax number	020 7228 8070

Age group	3-11
Inspection Date(s)	10 May 2007
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Belleville is one of the largest primary schools in the country. It serves a mixed and diverse community. Around half its pupils are of White British heritage and the other half from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. There is a growing and significant French population. About one in five pupils speaks English as an additional language, which is higher than average. Relatively few are at the early stages of learning English. The school has a small Nursery and accounts for only about one in three pupils entering the Reception year. On entry to the Reception year children's skills and understanding are a little above average. The school was awarded a Gold Artsmark in March 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Belleville is 'a shining example of a high performing, multicultural, state sector school', as one parent rightly summarised this outstanding school. This was typical of the views of many and illustrates the very high regard the school is held in by parents. Pupils, too, are immensely proud of their school and enjoy everything that it has to offer. They are extremely polite, friendly and well behaved. Outstanding and innovative leadership from the headteacher has created a school that is a vibrant and exciting place to visit. Pupils achieve exceptionally well. They are doing very well in the acquisition of basic skills and also have many opportunities to develop their creativity and talents through sport, music and a wide range of creative arts. The high quality of this work is enhanced through the contribution of specialist teachers, coaches and many visiting artists.

Whether beginning school life in the Nursery or Reception year, children get off to a very good start to their education because of a stimulating and supportive environment which enables them to quickly become confident learners. Pupils continue to make very rapid progress as they move through the school because teaching and learning are outstanding. The consistency of the teaching is a great strength. Teachers are enthusiastic and have excellent relationships with their classes. Consequently, pupils are eager to learn and always strive to do their best. By the time they leave, they are extremely well prepared for their secondary education and the world beyond. They reach standards that are significantly above average. They do exceptionally well in science because of a strong emphasis on the skills of investigation which makes the subject exciting and relevant. Although pupils do well in English, their progress in writing in Key Stage 2 is not as rapid as it is in reading. The school has rightly identified that pupils did not have sufficient opportunities to write for different audiences and purposes. It has addressed this issue but it is too early to fully judge the impact of the measures taken.

Every child really does matter at Belleville and results in outstanding care and support. This is evident in the way the school looks after its vulnerable pupils, including those with learning and behavioural issues. Pupils who are new to English or arrive from other schools are given extremely good support which enables them to settle quickly. Consequently, all pupils feel safe and well looked after. One Year 6 pupil wrote, 'In this school nobody cares how clever you are, they care about who you are.' Academic guidance is also very strong. Pupils' progress is monitored carefully, potential underachievement identified quickly and effective support put in place where it is needed. Good use of targets gives pupils and teachers a shared understanding of what is needed to take the next steps in learning.

The outstanding leadership and management is characterised by a relentless drive for improvement and has led to the high quality of provision and pupils' good achievement. The headteacher is very ably supported by his senior management team, governing body and a highly committed staff team. The open and flexible approach to leadership encourages leaders at all levels to participate in decision making and to make a contribution to improvement. As a result, the school is bubbling with fresh ideas. Leaders at all levels know the strengths of the school and address identified weaknesses robustly and effectively. This is evident in the successful way all issues from the last inspection have been addressed and illustrates that the school has outstanding capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that measures taken to accelerate pupils' progress in writing in Key Stage 2 have been fully effective.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils achieve extremely well in all aspects of their learning from their starting points. Children's very good progress in the Foundation Stage means that most meet, or exceed, the goals set for children of their age by the time they enter Year 1. By the end of Year 2 standards in reading, writing and mathematics are significantly above average and have risen over the past two years. Standards at the end of Year 6 have been significantly above average for many years. In mathematics, more able pupils have done well for the past two years but some lower achievers did not make enough progress in Years 3 to 5. The school has tackled this issue by radically changing the organisation of the subject and through staff development. As a result, pupils of all abilities are now making exceptionally good progress. Similarly, strategies such as the use of drama as a stimulus for writing appear to have been successful but pupils' achievement in reading remains better than it is in writing. Pupils with learning difficulties and those new to English are well supported and make rapid progress. The school has also been successful in raising the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils and they do much better than they do nationally. Pupils are also achieving exceptionally well in other aspects of the curriculum and their work in physical activities, information and communications technology (ICT) music and art, in particular, is of very high quality.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including the social, moral, spiritual and cultural dimensions, is outstanding. Pupils' evident enjoyment of their education is illustrated through their high levels of motivation in lessons and their enthusiastic participation in the wide range of activities on offer. They are kind and considerate of one another. As one Year 6 pupil said, 'This is a very multicultural school. The mixture of pupils helps us to get on with everybody.' Attendance is improving and is now broadly average as a result of the school's strenuous efforts. Pupils' wide participation in sports activities and awareness of a nutritional diet contribute to their exceptionally good understanding of the need to adopt a healthy lifestyle. The school council is proud of the contribution it has made to the awareness of these issues and await an audience with the cook! Pupils also take on other responsibilities willingly, for example, through the successful 'playground pals' initiative. Pupils are involved in the local community and demonstrate their concern for others by raising impressive sums for charity.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Excellent systems for monitoring and supporting teachers ensure that teaching and learning are outstanding overall. Teachers plan very effectively to meet the needs of all groups of learners. They enjoy a fruitful partnership with highly skilled support staff, who make an important contribution to the quality of education. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and engage them through challenging and interesting activities, making particularly good use of interactive

technology. As a result, pupils are highly motivated and make very good progress in their learning. Marking is consistently very good and helps pupils to know how to improve their work. Teachers work very closely together and are never afraid to try different approaches in order to address any underachievement that is identified by their tracking.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The outstanding curriculum provides very well for pupils' academic and personal development as well as giving them many opportunities to be creative and really enjoy their education. There are excellent strategies in place to support those who are in danger of falling behind and the school is quite prepared to change its approach if it is felt necessary. For example, setting by ability in mathematics in Years 3 to 5 was abandoned this year because some groups were not doing as well as expected, resulting in considerable improvements in the progress of all pupils. The enrichment of the curriculum is outstanding. As well as the specialist teaching, there are many clubs in such diverse activities as lacrosse, flamenco dancing and yoga to cater for all interests and talents, as well as numerous visits and visitors to the school. French is taught from Year 1 upwards and the school also arranges for the teaching of the French national curriculum after school to meet the needs of its French community. Provision for ICT has improved markedly since the last inspection and is used very effectively to support learning. Similarly, provision in the Foundation Stage is much improved and caters very well for the development of basic skills as well as allowing children to explore the world around them.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The outstanding care, guidance and support is acknowledged by parents and one commented, 'This is a friendly, caring school which develops the children in an all round way'. There are very good systems in place to ensure that pupils are very well supported and that no pupils are allowed 'to slip through the net' in such a large school. The school has excellent relationships with a wide range of outside agencies to meet the needs of pupils. Arrangements for the safeguarding of children are fully in place. The school enjoys a very strong partnership with its parents and seeks to involve them fully in their children's education. Strong academic guidance ensures that pupils and their parents know where they and what is needed to help them to move on in their learning. The excellent support for the school community is illustrated through the provision of breakfast and after school clubs that are very well attended.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management have been very successful in providing a rich and stimulating learning experience designed to find and celebrate the talents of every child. The building has been improved immeasurably and pupils have opportunities to shine in many facets of school life. Staff and governors are clear that one of the great strengths of leadership is that the headteacher 'empowers people to develop their ideas', as one governor put it. Hence, responsibilities are devolved to individuals and teams at many different levels. This helps to develop staff and ensures

that the school's strengths and weaknesses are understood by all. A team approach is then adopted to embed initiatives and address weaknesses. There are many examples of the success of this approach and its impact on achievement and standards. For example, the mathematics leader was freed from class teaching responsibilities in order to work alongside teachers over the past year. This has clearly been successful in improving pupils' progress. Governors are very supportive and knowledgeable and offer an extremely good balance of support and challenge to school leaders.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

¹ Grade 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.

All white boxes must be completed. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interest of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

Letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection.

18 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Belleville Primary School, London, SW11 6PR

I am writing to thank you all for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. I really enjoyed my day at Belleville and you all helped by being so friendly and eager to talk to me about the school. I thought you would like to know what I found out.

You and your parents are right to be proud of your school because it is outstanding. I was really impressed with how enthusiastic you all were and how you were bursting to tell me about all the good things you do. You should be very proud of yourselves because you were all very polite and friendly and well behaved. Well done all of you! You all feel safe because the staff look after you very well. I noticed that you all worked hard in lessons and tried to do your best.

You do very well in school because lessons are interesting and you told me how teachers help you to improve your work. Those of you who have just arrived or who find things a bit more difficult are given lots of help. You really enjoy all the fantastic opportunities you have to take part in sport, music and art. I was really impressed by the standard of your art work around the school! By the time you move on to secondary school you reach standards which are well above average and are very well prepared. You are doing well in English but not quite as well in writing as you do in reading. I know that your teachers are already working on this but I have asked them to look at ways to help you to do even better in writing.

One of the main reasons the school is doing so well because it is very well led by your headteacher. He gets lots of help from all the staff who work very well together as a team. They are determined to make things even better for you and I am sure that they will.

Best of luck to you all.

Yours truly

Graham Lee
Lead Inspector

