

Yorkmead Junior and Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103284
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	355356
Inspection dates	4–5 July 2011
Reporting inspector	Doris Bell

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 of pupils on the school roll	470
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Barbara Marsh
Headteacher	Helen Dunnico
Date of previous school inspection	16 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 27 lessons taught by 15 teachers. They also met with parents, carers, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including teachers' planning, the school improvement plan, assessment, monitoring and evaluation records, records for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and safeguarding policies and procedures. Inspectors also analysed the responses to the questionnaires for pupils and staff, and the 45 questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How well have pupils' done this year, and how effectively is the school improving progress, especially for girls in mathematics, and for higher-attaining pupils?
- How good is teachers' marking, how well are pupils involved in assessing and improving their own learning, and is the planned new curriculum promoting basic skills well enough?
- How well do leaders and managers, including members of the governing body, evaluate their work in relation to its impact on pupils' learning, in order to drive standards up faster?

Information about the school

This is a larger than average sized school. It has a well-above-average proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, and a well-above-average proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The large majority of these pupils are of Pakistani and other Asian heritages. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average, as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status, and runs a breakfast club for its own pupils.

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

2

Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. Good leadership and management have secured mostly good teaching, and the well-planned curriculum meets pupils' needs and interests effectively. It focuses on basic skills and provides a good balance of activities across all subjects that add to pupils' enjoyment of learning. Attainment is below average in Years 5 and 6, Achievement is satisfactory. While both have improved since the previous inspection, pupils in Years 5 and 6 are still overcoming the legacy of underachievement from previous years. Learning and progress, as seen in lessons, and in pupils' books, are now good, and attainment is now mostly at the expected levels for their ages in all other year groups.

The headteacher's unrelenting focus on trying to ensure all groups of pupils achieve as well as they can is successfully transmitted to all staff. It is reflected in the challenging targets set for every year group, and in the meticulous tracking of progress towards them. This has made staff more accountable for how well their pupils are doing, and it has established good teamwork across the school. Records show that areas for improvement in teaching and learning are followed up robustly, and relevant training and support is sought to help staff improve their practice. The school is reflective. Its self-evaluation is accurate, if at times cautious, and its priorities focus well on raising pupils' attainment and accelerating their progress. The school has good capacity for further improvement.

Creative partnership projects, designed to engage and inspire girls in Year 5, are being used well to tackle weaknesses in mathematics, as is the focus on number and calculation. Other aspects of mathematics have been given less attention, and there are too few opportunities for pupils to use their number skills to solve mathematical problems. Much has been done since the previous inspection to improve pupils' speaking and listening skills and to develop their vocabulary in order to improve their writing. Nevertheless, some staff still miss opportunities to do this. Writing is marked well when it occurs in literacy lessons, but not when it occurs in other subjects. In most lessons, pupils' work is well matched to their different levels of ability. Occasionally, higher-attaining pupils are given more of the same work instead of more challenging work. The systems in place to track and improve the progress of individual pupils are tackling this well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress as other pupils, as do pupils who speak English as an additional language. Well-briefed support staff assist both groups of pupils effectively.

Good quality care, guidance and support ensure that pupils, including those whose circumstances might make them vulnerable, are safe and well cared for at all times. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, fit and healthy. They behave well, and make a good contribution to the school and wider community. The school is a harmonious community where pupils from different faiths and cultures successfully learn

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to celebrate each other's similarities and respect each other's differences. All of this, and their increasingly good progress in basic skills, means pupils leave the school adequately prepared for their future.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics by:
 - providing a better balance between number work and other aspects of mathematics
 - giving pupils more opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills in practical, problem-solving activities.
 - Accelerate pupils' progress in writing by:
 - ensuring that pupils understand and use new vocabulary in speaking and listening activities, in response to questions, and in their writing
 - marking writing skills equally well wherever they are used, so that pupils are constantly reminded of what they need to do to reach their targets.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Children start at the school with skills that are significantly below those expected for their age. They learn and develop well, but still start Year 1 with below average attainment, albeit demonstrating particularly good progress in writing and calculation. Improvements in teaching and learning over the past year mean that attainment by the end of Year 2 is now broadly average. Progress is good in Key Stage 2, with Year 3 and Year 4 attaining close to the national average. However, in Years 5 and 6, pupils' still have ground to make up because of past weaknesses in their learning. The emphasis placed on improving basic skills is paying off in the accelerated progress here and in Years 3 to 6. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 6 take the reader through a range of emotions in extended pieces of writing, for example, using humour and pathos well to convey meaning. Typically, pupils learn to write for different audiences and purposes, but their vocabulary is relatively limited and they sometimes confuse different forms of writing. For example, timely intervention by the teacher stopped pupils in Year 6 slipping into writing a story instead of a diary. By Year 6, handwriting is mostly clear and letters are well formed, but weaknesses remain in spelling, punctuation and grammar, which the school is working hard to overcome. Spelling in particular, is improving, especially in the younger year groups, because of the emphasis now placed on linking letters and sounds, and grammar and punctuation feature largely in good marking to which the pupils respond well.

The introduction of '4-a-day' in mathematics is sharpening pupils' ability to calculate rapidly and accurately. During the inspection, these sessions added to pupils' enjoyment of learning and successfully clarified their understanding of how to recognise and use, for example, factors, fractions and decimals. Understandably, the school has focused on number and calculation to accelerate progress. Limited examples of the use of shape, space and measure, and of data handling were noted, for example, in science and in topic work. However, these aspects of mathematics are less well developed.

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Pupils feel safe in school, and they know how to keep themselves safe in and out of school. They say they always have someone to turn to if they have any concerns. The vast majority behave well, in and out of lessons. They say the school deals quickly and effectively with any untoward behaviour, including the rare incidents of bullying or harassment. Pupils make healthy eating choices, praise the school lunches, and readily participate in the many sporting activities available to them during and outside of the normal school day. They are looking forward to the 'cluster Olympics' where they will compete with neighbouring schools. School councillors take their responsibilities very seriously, encouraging, for example, care for the environment, recycling, and fundraising for different charities, including sponsoring a child in Pakistan. Pupils are mostly courteous, caring and respectful towards each other and adults. They work together well and make a good contribution to the school and wider community. They are very receptive to learning about the different faiths and cultures in each.

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	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
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	2
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

Pupils are fully involved in assessing and improving their own and each other's learning. This, and good quality marking in English and mathematics, is helping them understand how to improve their own work. Marking is not as effective in other subjects. Outside of literacy lessons, opportunities are missed to keep pupils focused on their writing targets. Pupils determine some of their own learning in topic work. Their curiosity is kindled well as

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they share their ideas with their teachers about what they already know and what more they would like to find out. Teachers skilfully weave this information into their planning while ensuring that the key skills in each subject are taught, to ensure progress. Overall, the curriculum is creative, literacy and numeracy skills are embedded well within it, and it supports pupils' personal development effectively. The wide range of visits, visitors and well-attended extra-curricular activities across sport and the arts add to this.

In lessons, clear explanations ensure pupils know what to do. The increasingly effective use of talking partners gives them time to gather their thoughts before answering. This particularly helps pupils who speak English is an additional language because it gives them time to think and articulate what they want to say. Staff are mostly skilled at explaining new vocabulary, checking pupils' understanding, and expecting pupils to answer fully. Support staff often ask searching questions of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and then encourage them to work independently. This benefits their learning. Sometimes, however, adults too readily accept short answers or do not model vocabulary well enough for the pupils to help enliven their writing. Nevertheless, teaching usually builds well on what pupils show they already know, and much effort goes into meeting individual needs. Occasionally, higher-attaining pupils are given more of the same work instead of more challenging work. The school knows where this happens and is supporting teachers in rectifying the situation.

The school's good links with external agencies contribute effectively to pupils' learning and personal development. They particularly support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or those whose circumstances might make them vulnerable, and have also led to improvements in attendance this year. A range of workshops engage parents and carers in their children's learning, for example, the 'Keeping up with the children' workshops for parents and carers of pupils in Year 1. Pastoral care is responsive to the needs of individual pupils and good transition arrangements ease the passage from one phase or year of education to another. The breakfast club ensures that pupils who attend it make a calm, positive and healthy start to their day.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders have successfully embedded in staff a shared ambition to secure better outcomes for pupils. Staff, inspired by a visible sense of purpose, are focused on meeting ambitious targets. The leadership and management of teaching and learning focus on developing staff as professionals and putting the onus on them to take responsibility for their own class and for delivering high-quality learning. There is a growing sense of the

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need for all to be involved in searching, rigorous monitoring in order to drive improvement faster. Self-analysis and self-challenge are incorporated into a well-focused school development plan, and are evident in increasingly good teaching and pupil progress. Actions are implemented precisely and areas for improvement are followed up until change is fully integrated into the everyday life of the school. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body supports the school well, understands the challenges it faces, and is becoming increasingly involved in holding it to account.

Safeguarding arrangements, including those for child protection, meet current requirements and ensure that pupils are safe and secure at school. The views of parents and carers are sought at regular intervals, and they are acted upon. Relationships with parents and carers are good. The school promotes equality of opportunity well and it tackles all forms of discrimination robustly. It regularly checks the participation rates of different groups of pupils in different activities and works hard to ensure that all are included in everything it has to offer. The school celebrates diversity effectively and is itself a cohesive community. It makes good use of its excellent understanding of its own context and the community it serves, to help pupils understand and respect different faiths and cultures. The pupils' work exploring faith through themes such as joy, sadness, mercy and forgiveness exemplifies this well. The least well developed aspect of community cohesion is pupils' understanding of the diversity of culture across the United Kingdom.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good leadership and management ensure that the needs of the children are met well. Effective induction procedures ensure that they, with the support of their parents and carers, settle quickly into the well-established school routines. The strong emphasis on promoting children's safety, health and well-being means that children play and learn in a

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safe, secure and exciting learning environment that rouses their curiosity and gives them the confidence to explore the world around them. Topics are supported by educational visits that add to all of this.

Children readily engage in conversations with each other and with adults, and they develop good social skills as they do so. They make good progress in learning to read, write and count. Early indications from this year's outcomes suggest they have done particularly well in writing and calculation, two areas on which the school has focused this year. Adults are mostly accessible, helpful and focused on learning, although there are occasions when they do not intervene sufficiently in independent activities, and therefore miss opportunities to move learning on. There is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated learning, and relationships between adults and children are consistently good. The information gained from the regular assessments of children's progress is used effectively to plan the next steps in their learning. Opportunities for outdoor learning are built into planning but the school rightly sees further development of this as an area for improvement.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Few parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire but most of those who did are satisfied with what the school does for them and their children. Inspectors thoroughly investigated the aspects in which parents and carers were less positive by, for example, examining records relating to pupils' behaviour and progress, and by talking with parents and carers, and with pupils and staff. They found no evidence to indicate the issues raised had school-wide implications.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Yorkmead Junior and Infant 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 inspection team received 45 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 470 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	18	40	25	56	0	0	2	4
The school keeps my child safe	23	51	18	40	2	4	2	4
My school informs me about my child's progress	15	33	25	56	3	7	2	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	29	26	58	4	9	2	4
The teaching is good at this school	10	22	30	67	3	7	2	4
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	29	27	60	4	9	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	12	27	26	58	6	13	1	2
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)	11	24	23	51	1	2	2	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	18	30	67	0	0	3	7
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	22	27	60	4	9	4	9
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	9	20	27	60	4	9	4	9
The school is led and managed effectively	8	18	27	60	3	7	2	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	15	33	24	53	0	0	3	7

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 all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



6 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Yorkmead Junior and Infant School, Birmingham, B28 8BB

Thank you very much for the very warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school, and for talking with us about your work. You clearly enjoy school and want to learn as much as you can. Those who lead and manage the school are working very hard to ensure that you do. You told us that you could turn to any member of staff if you are worried about something, and they would help you. We found that all adults care for you well and help you to make the right choices by, for example, understanding how to keep yourselves safe, fit and healthy. Your good attitudes and behaviour help in this, and contribute to the good progress you are now making.

We found that your school is satisfactory, although it has improved a great deal since it was last inspected. Your headteacher and other teachers have accurately identified what the school needs to do to become even better. We are asking them to concentrate even more on doing the following, to help you make even faster progress.

You need more opportunities to learn more about all aspects of mathematics, and solve mathematical problems so that every day you can use the number skills you have learnt.

Teachers need to help you understand and use the vocabulary you learn in different lessons, and mark your writing equally well, so that you are constantly reminded how you can improve it.

You can help by continuing to listen carefully, using new vocabulary well, and trying to remember your writing targets whenever you write. We hope that by doing these things, you will continue to enjoy learning in the future as much as you do now.

Yours sincerely

Doris Bell

Lead Inspector

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