

# Yardley Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	133996
<b>Local Authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	381589
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 September 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Doris Bell

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	658
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ian Kelcey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jan Moss
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 December 2008
<b>School address</b>	Harvey Road Birmingham B26 1TD
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They visited 37 lessons taught by 21 teachers. They also met with parents and 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 89 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.

- What evidence does the school have to show writing is improving, especially through the curriculum, and as a result of marking in all subjects?
- How well does the school assess and track the progress of different groups of pupils, and how does it ensure teacher assessment is accurate?
- Are leaders and managers rigorously following up areas for improvement in teaching and learning?

## Information about the school

This is a very large school, which is expanding further to become a school with four classes in each year group. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average, as is the proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities. An above average proportion of pupils, around half of whom are of Pakistani origin, come from minority ethnic backgrounds and speak English as an additional language. The two days of the inspection were the first two days of school for the first group of Reception children. Their start was delayed due to building works. The governing body run before- and after-school clubs. The school has achieved a range of awards amongst which are a Healthy Schools Award, a Next Generation Award for its creative curriculum, and the Activemark.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school. Pupils achieve well because they are taught well. The different leadership teams fully understand their role in driving improvement. They successfully focus staff on helping pupils to succeed personally as well as academically. They do this by rigorously tracking pupils' progress and using the information in planning at strategic level as well as at classroom level. School self-evaluation is accurate and well-founded. It results in a well-focused improvement plan, which is informed by the views of staff, pupils, governors and parents and carers. Initiatives introduced to improve reading and mathematics have raised attainment across the school. The school has rightly turned its attention to doing the same in writing, although weaknesses remain in this area. Taken together, all of the above demonstrates the school has good capacity for further improvement.

Having started school with skills below those expected for their age, children make good progress in Reception. This is evident in work from last year and in the lessons observed with the new children during the inspection. However, provision for outdoor learning remains an issue.

The curriculum is well organised and imaginative. It captures pupils' interest and it is tailored well to their needs. It promotes basic skills effectively and provides many opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills. In topic work, pupils use different styles of writing for different purposes. In some lessons, however, having to sit and listen to their teachers for too long cuts down on the time available for them to practise their writing. Additionally, when pupils write in different subjects, their writing is not marked as rigorously as in literacy. Therefore, opportunities are missed to focus them on their writing targets at all times.

Pupils behave well and they say they enjoy school. They say that 'everyone is kind', that staff always support them, and that they 'have a voice'. Pupils feel very safe in school and they have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, fit and healthy. The school's safeguarding practices are exemplary, and the governing body is extremely vigilant in this area. Good levels of care, guidance and support are provided for all pupils, including those whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Despite all of this, attendance is only satisfactory. This is because some parents and carers do not cooperate with the school well enough by ensuring their children attend regularly so that they can learn as much as possible.

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

- Take every opportunity to improve pupils' writing skills, including by:
  - moving pupils onto writing tasks sooner in lessons
  - marking writing equally well wherever it occurs, to keep pupils focused on their writing targets at all times.
- Find ways to improve outdoor provision for Reception children, and ensure they have ready access to it.
- Raise the level of pupils' attendance by finding ways to impress on parents and carers the importance of getting their children to school regularly.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

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There are no discernible differences between the progress of different groups of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress as all other pupils. Well-briefed staff provide carefully focused support so that by the time they leave the school, the gap between their learning and that of other pupils has narrowed. This happens because the school looks at each pupil's needs and tailors work and support staff to meet them. The step-by-step approach then taken enables pupils to revisit and consolidate learning about which they might be insecure, while helping to move them on as and when they need to, with additional challenges. Pupils for whom English is an additional language develop a good range of vocabulary that helps particularly in their writing and enables most of them to reach the expected level by Year 6.

A reading initiative has contributed to an upward trend in attainment in Year 2, taking it to significantly above average in 2010, and at least above average this year. Improvements in writing are particularly impressive in this age group. Handwriting is well formed, pupils mostly use punctuation well, and longer pieces of writing show they can construct sentences accurately, sometimes using connectives and a good range of adjectives to make their writing interesting. In Years 5 and 6, where pupils have not had the benefit of the new initiatives, handwriting is more variable, and there are common errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation. However, longer pieces of writing show imagination because pupils become highly motivated by the links made between subjects. This was noted in an excellent Year 6 lesson, where they explored crime and punishment in the past.

Pupils have good calculation skills, which they use well to solve increasingly complex mathematical problems. They persevere with these and present their work well. For example, as Year 6 pupils in different classes made a list of objects they would buy from a catalogue, they set their calculations out accurately so that they could calculate hundreds, tens and units while keeping the decimal point in the same

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place.

Pupils are confident learners. They know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. They readily assess their own and others’ work against, in most lessons, clear success criteria. They sometimes select their own success criteria to take their learning forward. Pupils know right from wrong. They appreciate the disciplinary code, which they see as fair and contributing to improved behaviour. They report that the few instances of bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively. They appreciate the many sporting activities that help them to keep fit and healthy, and they make healthy eating choices. They are justifiably proud of how all of this enabled the school to receive a Healthy School’s Award, and the Activemark. The school council is active in collecting and promoting pupils’ ideas, which led to getting playground equipment. Other pupils readily accept responsibility, for example, as monitors at play and lunchtimes. Pupils are reflective and caring. They successfully learn about the different cultures within the school and wider community, and they all get on well together, regardless of background, ethnicity or ability.

*These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes*

<b>Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils’ behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

<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

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Teachers plan well in year group teams to meet the needs of all learners, and most provide high quality feedback to pupils in lessons. Thus, misconceptions are corrected as they arise, and learning is adjusted to suit individual need. An excellent mathematics lesson enabled all pupils to reach a much greater understanding of decimals and of how to plan spending, while instilling in them an appreciation of the value of mathematical learning in everyday life. Marking is regular. It usually identifies for pupils the next steps in their learning, but there are some inconsistencies here, especially when pupils write in different subjects. The pace of learning in lessons is usually fast. This is mainly as a result of setting time limits within which pupils must complete a series of tasks that take them towards their targets, and well-targeted questioning that involves all pupils. Where teaching is less successful, success criteria are not used well to support learning, pupils become unclear about what they are expected to learn, and they do not make enough progress in lessons.

Through the ‘Yardley Primary Curriculum’, pupils study a wide range of topics in which learning is extended and enriched by a good number of visits, visitors and well-attended extra-curricular activities. The effective links between subjects, and between academic and personal development, ensure pupils develop good independent skills, learn to work as a team, and make good progress in acquiring basic skills that prepare them well for the future. Computers and interactive whiteboards are used well to support learning in different subjects. The focus on relating mathematical problems to everyday life has fostered in pupils a love of mathematics. The school is working towards bringing all subjects together even more effectively so that the curriculum can lead to further improvements in attainment.

Pupils feel they benefit from the good transition arrangements from year to year and on into high school. Links with other schools, for example, the mathematics lessons held at the high school at the end of the school day, support pupils’ learning. Links with other agencies also benefit pupils’ learning and personal development. They also help pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to develop well. The school is especially good at helping pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, to settle and learn well. Much is in place to promote good behaviour and attendance, but attendance has declined in recent years because not all parents and carers cooperate with the school in ensuring their children attend regularly. Well-organised before- and after-school clubs provide pupils with a good start to their day, and with worthwhile activities at the end of the day as they wait for their parents and carers to collect them.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where</b>	<b>2</b>

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<b>relevant, through partnerships</b>	
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Effective leadership teams, ably led by senior leaders, are driving improvement throughout the school. The monitoring of teaching and learning is rigorous and well-focused on improvement. Weaknesses are followed up robustly to ensure the school’s priorities are being met. This has raised the quality of teaching further.

Governance is good. The governing body is well informed. It regularly checks the work of the school, explores data and challenges the school to improve. The pupils’ safety and security are paramount, especially during the current building works. It is to the credit of staff and pupils alike, that the school year has got off to a good start despite the many changes they have had to cope with as a result of the work. Safeguarding procedures, including those for child protection, are exemplary. The governing body has much expertise in this area, which it uses very effectively. It has a specific safeguarding group that makes monthly checks to ensure safeguarding procedures are being carried out effectively. The school is a very safe place for the pupils.

The school promotes equality of opportunity well. It is a very inclusive school that encourages pupils to challenge stereotypes, celebrate similarities and respect people’s differences. It has a good understanding of its own community, and reaches out to the wider community that it serves. It also ensures that, through themed weeks, links with other schools, and the study of different locations in different countries, pupils widen their horizons by learning about different faiths and cultures at home and abroad, and the need to respect them.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>



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<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children learn and develop well. The new leader is being supported well by the senior leadership team, who have a clear vision for further improvement, to which all Early Years Foundation Stage staff contribute. Good links with parents, carers and external agencies ensure that children’s health, safety and welfare are attended to well. As children started school, inspectors noted that they and their parents and carers had been well prepared. Parents and carers remained with their children, who settled quickly, enabling staff to start them on their learning journey straight away. Observations of children who have just left Reception show that they develop good personal skills, can take responsibility in generating ideas, collaborate and behave safely.

Early reading, writing and mathematical skills are given due attention and, while the curriculum is planned well, it is also flexible enough to take on board the children’s ideas and cater for their interests. Much is in place also to promote good personal development skills. The curriculum encourages exploration through stimulating children’s curiosity in a wide range of activities across all areas of learning. There is also a good balance between adult-directed and child-initiated learning. The indoor learning environment is warm and welcoming. Opportunities for outdoor learning are included in planning. However, children do not have free access to it and, given the increase in the number of children in Reception, the areas are not big enough to be an extension of the indoor classroom.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

A very small proportion of parents and carers returned the inspection questionnaires. Most of those who responded, or spoke to inspectors during the inspection, are very satisfied with the school. They speak of the ‘lovely atmosphere’, say their children are ‘very happy’, and that they are impressed with the way the school has managed their children’s safety during the building works. A few parents and carers raised concerns about behaviour, felt the school did not listen to them, or give them

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enough information about their children's progress. The inspection team endorse the positive views but found no evidence to support the negative comments. In particular, regular coffee mornings with the headteacher give parents and carers the opportunity to voice concerns, ask questions and make suggestions. The headteacher responds in writing to all of these. She ensures the school takes on board what it can, and explains to parents and carers the reasons for things it cannot do.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Yardley Primary 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 89 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 658 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	49	41	46	4	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	44	49	42	47	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	36	40	45	51	5	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	37	42	44	49	4	4	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	33	37	52	58	2	2	1	1
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	31	35	50	56	4	4	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	29	58	65	2	2	2	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)	28	31	54	61	2	2	1	1
The school meets my child’s particular needs	33	37	47	53	5	6	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	24	51	57	10	11	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	24	51	57	9	10	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	33	37	47	53	5	6	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	38	43	43	48	2	2	3	3

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



21 September 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Yardley Primary School, Birmingham, B26 1TD**

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school and for talking with us about what you do there. You go to a good school. Those who lead and manage it ensure that you are very safe at all times. The staff all care for you, and guide and support your learning and personal development well. We know that you understand well why it is important to keep yourselves safe, fit and healthy. You describe many different ways in which you learn how to do this, not least by the good levels of attendance at the different sporting activities available to you.

We looked at what you are doing now, and at your books from last year, and noted that you all make good progress in your learning. Your teachers are vigilant. They pick up quickly when you seem not to understand something and quickly adjust what they are doing, in order to help you. We noted how well you behave in lessons and mostly around the school too. It is a credit to you how well you have coped with the new buildings and the change around of classrooms in the school. Your readiness to adapt to change and your determination to do well are real strengths. Within all of this, we have asked the school to do some things to help you make even better progress.

- We have asked your teachers to ensure that you can get started on your writing sooner in lessons, and that they mark your writing even in, for example, science and topic work.
- We have asked the school's leaders to improve outdoor learning for children in Reception.
- We have asked the school to work with your parents and carers to ensure you all attend school regularly because when you do not, you cannot learn as much.

You all can help by continuing to work hard, remembering your writing targets whenever you write, and trying hard to come to school every day of the school year. We hope you will enjoy learning for the rest of your lives as much as you do now.

Yours sincerely

Doris Bell  
Lead inspector

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