

# Yew Tree Community Junior and Infant School (NC)

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103259
<b>Local Authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	376864
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 September 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mike Thompson

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	459
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Nasir Awan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Shaukat Islam
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 October 2008
<b>School address</b>	Yew Tree Road Aston Birmingham B6 6RX
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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	22–23 September 2011
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors, one of whom visited the school for half a day specifically to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures. The inspectors observed 29 lessons taught by 18 teachers, including some observations with a specific focus on pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, members of the teaching staff, representatives of the governing body and pupils. They looked at a range of information, including data showing the progress made by pupils and samples of pupils' work. Inspectors analysed questionnaires returned by 158 parents and carers, 99 pupils and 27 members of staff.

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

- How effective is the school in developing pupils' skills in English, and particularly their comprehension, so that they make at least satisfactory progress?
- How effective has the school been in responding to the previous inspection findings by widening pupils' perspectives of other cultural traditions?
- To what extent does teaching provide consistently challenging work, particularly for more-able pupils?
- How skilled are middle leaders in monitoring and evaluating, and what is their impact on pupils' achievement?

## Information about the school

This is a large primary school located close to Birmingham city centre. Almost all of its pupils are from minority ethnic groups, mostly of Pakistani or Bangladeshi backgrounds, and speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. Most of these pupils have general learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is about twice the national average.

The school has the Quality Mark in recognition of its good practice in promoting literacy and numeracy, and Healthy School status.

**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. It is rapidly improving and demonstrates a good capacity for sustained improvement through an accurate appraisal of its own effectiveness and the success of its work in improving pupils' learning since the last inspection. During this period, standards have risen at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2. The school now moves children from low starting points when they join the Nursery to attain standards that are broadly in line with the national averages in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Securely underpinning its work in ensuring that pupils achieve well is good quality teaching, a good curriculum which includes a strong focus on developing pupils' skills in English, and excellent day-to-day care. It is an inclusive school in which pupils are warmly welcomed and equally valued.

The pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe, and say that they feel safe at school because all adults take exceptionally good care of them. Their parents and carers strongly agree. Pupils' good understanding of the importance of pursuing a healthy lifestyle is recognised through the Healthy School award. Pupils' well-developed social skills, together with their eagerness to learn and outstanding behaviour, provide a secure platform for good learning to take place. The school is effective in ensuring that pupils have a secure grasp of basic skills in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. The key to this success is skilled teaching coupled with rigorous monitoring of the pupils' performance. Those identified as making less than expected progress are given extra help in effective 'intervention groups'. This additional teaching support also benefits all other pupils because class sizes for lessons in English and mathematics are reduced. The strategies used to help overcome barriers to learning are highly effective and contribute strongly to the good progress made by pupils. For example, pupils involved in the national 'Every Child a Talker' initiative are making outstanding progress.

In lessons, the good dialogue between teachers and their pupils, based on the teachers' effective skills in questioning, has a positive impact on the quality of learning. Pupils enjoy challenge, and the good teaching that they receive generally ensures that they are not disappointed. Most often, teachers are good at pitching work to reflect different levels of ability, including the most able. However, in instances when all pupils have the same task, the teachers sometimes miss opportunities to ensure good levels of individual challenge. This occurs when they do not make their expectations clear of how pupils of different abilities can succeed in completing their work.

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The improvements made in all aspects of provision demonstrate the effective leadership provided by the headteacher and his senior staff. The governing body fulfils its role well by providing good support and effective challenge. The middle-level leaders have a very clear understanding of their role and are strongly committed to playing a full part in improving the school further. However, their overview of pupils' progress is not fully informed because they have too few opportunities to observe teaching and learning. The computerised system for setting targets for pupils to achieve in reading, writing and mathematics over the course of each year provides benchmarks for the regular monitoring of pupils' progress. In some cases, these targets are not adjusted carefully enough to provide achievable challenges for some individuals. However, the overall targets for the attainment and progress of whole year groups are ambitious and provide clear challenges for all staff.

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

- Ensure that teachers provide consistently high levels of challenge for pupils in lessons by making increased use of success criteria to set specific, measurable targets for pupils to achieve, carefully matched to their different abilities.
- Add even greater rigour to the monitoring of pupils' progress by ensuring that:
  - the process of setting targets for pupils to achieve by the end of each year is more highly tailored to individual circumstances
  - middle leaders become better informed about the impact of teaching on pupils' learning through regular observations of lessons.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

It was clear from the lessons observed during the inspection that all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those in the very early stages of learning English, generally learn well. Some of these pupils have difficulty in concentrating while others have limited understanding because of their lack of vocabulary. However, in all instances observed these barriers to learning are successfully countered through good quality individual support. Teaching assistants play a key role and ensure the inclusion of pupils in lessons. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, a skilled teaching assistant was alert to the difficulties encountered by individuals within a 'target group', and ensured their full participation. The support provided enabled pupils to channel their thoughts more precisely in order to solve word problems. The more able pupils are also suitably challenged in a number of ways. One of the most successful is the grouping of pupils according to prior attainment in English and mathematics. The good progress made by pupils in developing skills in working both collaboratively and independently, and their willingness to learn, help ensure that they play a full part in lessons.

The school's very strong focus on improving pupils' attendance has produced remarkable results, and rates have improved from below to above the national

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average. The high levels of politeness and consideration shown by pupils fully reflect the school’s overriding value that ‘Every child is special’. A very clear moral code permeates the daily life of the school and pupils clearly know right from wrong. Pupils make a positive contribution to the wider community by, for example, fundraising for various charities. A significant improvement since the last inspection is pupils’ understanding and experience of other cultural traditions. For example, reciprocal visits with a largely White British school in Henley in Arden and contacts with a school in Sydney, Australia have done much to help broaden pupils’ horizons.

*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>1</b>
<b>Pupils’ behaviour</b>	<b>1</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>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

The quality of teaching observed ranged from satisfactory to outstanding. Relationships between teachers and their pupils are extremely good. The result is a high quality climate for learning in which pupils rapidly develop confidence as learners because they feel secure and well looked-after. Where teaching is best, the teachers’ high expectations of what pupils’ can achieve results in a crisp pace of learning. In most instances, teachers set out clearly what they expect to see in pupils’ completed work. However, on some occasions, these criteria are not made clear enough and consequently the pupils do not know precisely what they have to do to demonstrate their learning.

The curriculum contributes strongly to the good progress made by the pupils. One of its many strengths is the use of a wide range of first-hand learning activities, including the good use of local resources. These heighten pupils’ enjoyment of

<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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education and help excite and motivate them. For example, during the course of the inspection, pupils in Year 5 spent a day at a local centre for environmental studies. This provided activities, such as pond dipping, which are not available at school because of lack of space. The school regularly plans activities designed to enrich pupils’ experiences while broadening their vocabulary and developing their skills in comprehension.

The school is an extremely caring community in which pupils’ welfare is given a high priority. The social and emotional needs of every pupil are very well understood, and are met exceptionally well. For instance, the school provided striking examples of the beneficial impact of its actions on both family life and the achievement of pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Procedures for the induction of pupils into the Nursery help them to settle quickly, and similarly effective arrangements enable pupils to transfer confidently to the next phase of their education.

*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 relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Almost all parents and carers who completed the inspection questionnaire felt that the school is led and managed effectively. All aspects of leadership, including governance, have improved since the last inspection. The governing body is well organised and its effectiveness is good. Governors know the school well and closely monitor its performance. The headteacher is the driving force for improvement and is supported well by his senior leaders and the staff team. However, middle leaders do not have sufficient opportunity to develop their skills in evaluating the impact of teaching on pupils’ achievement. The initiatives introduced by leaders have brought about significant improvements in pupils’ progress and have raised standards. The school is rigorous in the way in which it constantly seeks to improve further. For example, the close analysis of a slight dip in the performance of Year 6 pupils in English in 2011 determined that the cause lay in pupils’ lack of familiarity with non-fiction texts. Actions are now in place to help tackle this weakness through, for example, guided-reading sessions. Targets for the performance of year groups are challenging and are based on a realistic appraisal of the school’s strengths and weaknesses. A key feature of the school’s success in driving improvement is the strong commitment to the professional development of staff, and the good teamwork evident.

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Safeguarding procedures have a high profile, fully meet requirements, and are rigorously applied as a result of well-developed systems for quality assurance and risk assessment. A wide range of effective partnerships, particularly in support of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, adds value to pupils’ experiences. The school is a strongly cohesive community within which equality of opportunity has a high profile and discrimination has no place. It plays an important role in community cohesion within the locality and is helping broaden pupils’ horizons within both national and global perspectives. The school is effective in working with parents and carers to provide them with skills to support their children’s learning at home. This is a particularly strong feature of the Nursery. During the inspection, staff from the Nursery worked with a group of parents and carers and their children to make play-dough and then showed the adults how useful this medium can be as a learning experience for very young children.

*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>2</b>
<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

On entry to the Nursery, many children’s attainment is consistently well below what is expected nationally. Particular weaknesses are children’s limited ability to interact with others, their weak skills in English, and their poor knowledge and understanding of the world around them. As a result of consistently good leadership, the children make good progress overall, and outstanding progress in acquiring social skills. One of the many reasons for this excellent social development is the shared use of the area for outdoor learning. This means that children in the Reception classes help welcome children new to the Nursery and at the same time learn more about making relationships. The children have ready access to a wide range of exciting activities, both indoors and out. These cover all areas of learning while capturing children’s imaginations and encouraging initiative. Adults have a good understanding of the



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learning needs of young children and place a strong focus on developing children’s skills in spoken English during all activities. For example, in a cake-making session a teacher’s modelling of language effectively helped develop both understanding and vocabulary. All adults place a strong emphasis on ensuring the welfare and safety of the children and keep a careful check on children’s progress so that provision can be suitably adjusted in response to what is learned. However, the written assessments on which some of the monitoring is based are sometimes too descriptive. They lack detailed evaluation of precisely how well the children have achieved their tasks and make few suggestions about the next steps in learning for each individual. Nonetheless, the clear display of these assessments provides an excellent focus for dialogue with parents and carers about their children’s learning. Despite the good progress made, children’s attainment falls a little short of the goals expected by the time they move from Reception to Year 1.

*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

The rate of response to the inspection questionnaire was better than generally found. Inspection findings confirm the positive views expressed by the very large majority of parents and carers in all areas surveyed. All parents and carers who responded agreed that their children enjoy school. A few felt the school could do more to help them support their child’s learning and meet their child’s particular needs. Inspectors found that the school works well with parents and that pupils’ needs are met well. There were very few written comments, and almost all of these were positive.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Yew Tree Community Junior and Infant School (NC) 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 158 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 459 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	109	69	49	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	99	63	56	35	1	1	1	1
The school informs me about my child’s progress	80	51	73	46	3	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	73	46	77	49	7	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	83	53	69	44	5	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	79	50	66	42	9	6	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	82	52	69	44	5	3	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)	77	49	69	44	5	3	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	66	42	80	51	8	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	79	50	74	47	5	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	63	40	80	51	7	4	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	73	46	77	49	2	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	82	53	65	42	4	3	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 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.**

26 September 2011

Dear Pupils



**Inspection of Yew Tree Community Junior and Infant School (NC),  
Birmingham, B6 6RX**

On behalf of the inspectors, I would like to thank you very much for being so helpful when we came to visit your school and for sharing your views with us. We really enjoyed meeting you and looking at your work. You told us that you go to a good school, and we agree.

Here is a list of some of the things that your school does best.

- You learn well in lessons and make good progress because you are taught well.
- You develop your personal skills well. This is important in helping you to become good citizens in the future. Your behaviour is excellent. Well done!
- You told us that you enjoy and learn a lot from the interesting and exciting activities your teachers plan for you.
- You also said that you feel safe. This is because all of the adults in your school look after you extremely well.
- The people who run your school are doing a good job.

Every school has something that could be improved, and this is what we have asked your school to do to help you to make even more progress.

- We would like your teachers to make sure that when you all have the same work to do in lessons they give you different targets to achieve as you do your work. We think that you are ready for this challenge!
- We have asked your headteacher and senior managers to make sure that the teachers who are in charge of different subjects learn more about your learning by visiting lessons. We also want your teachers to adjust the targets that are set for you by the computer program that is used to check on your progress. This is because some of the targets are too easy and some are too hard.

I would like you to play your part in helping the school to become even better. The best way for you to do this is to pay careful attention to what your teachers ask you to do and to work hard, so that you become more expert in speaking, reading and writing by learning the meaning of more words!

I wish you great success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mike Thompson  
Lead inspector

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