

# Yardley Primary School

Harvey Road, Yardley, Birmingham, B26 1TD

**Inspection dates** 13–14 February 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils' achievement has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils make good progress throughout the school, reflecting the good teaching they receive.
- Pupils enter the school with skills that are below those expected for their age. They leave Year 6 with standards that are similar to national averages. In 2013, standards in reading were well above average.
- Teachers plan work that is a good fit to pupils starting points and they use questions well to check their understanding and to challenge their thinking.
- Teaching in the Reception classes is good and often outstanding, resulting in children making rapid progress.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Pupils are keen to learn, respond well to teachers and want each other to succeed in their learning. They are proud of their school and take care to keep their work neat and tidy.
- The school does an outstanding job of keeping its pupils safe. There is almost no bullying and pupils are taught how to recognise risk and take an active role in keeping themselves and others safe.
- The headteacher, the senior leadership team and the governing body provide strong and determined leadership that has the continuous improvement of teaching and learning at its core.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always check that the challenges and tasks set as part of their marking are carried out.
- The most-able pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable, because the work set for them in some lessons is too easy.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 40 lessons, six of which were seen together with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors made other short visits to lessons and to learning areas in the course of their observations of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They also listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors observed senior leaders reporting back to teachers on the quality of their teaching.
- Inspectors spoke informally to parents as they brought their children to school and considered the responses to a very recent survey of parents' opinions that the school had conducted. There were too few responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, for inspectors to review.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, members of the governing body, senior and subject leaders and teaching staff. A telephone conversation took place with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school, and looked at pupils' books and at a number of documents, including the school's own data and monitoring of how well pupils are achieving. They also checked planning documents and the school's own judgements of its performance, records of checks on the quality of teaching, and records of behaviour, attendance and punctuality, as well as documents relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Simon Blackburn, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Dennis Brittain	Additional Inspector
Roisin Chambers	Additional Inspector
Gillian Weston	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium is above the national average. (The pupil premium gives the school additional funding for pupils who are eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority, and children with a parent in the armed services.)
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average, but the proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- About two thirds of the pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The current headteacher and deputy headteacher both took up their posts in January 2014.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding to increase pupils' achievement further, by ensuring teachers:
  - provide pupils, and particularly the most able, with work that consistently extends their understanding and challenges their thinking
  - check that pupils use the additional tasks and challenges that are set as part of teachers' marking to improve their work.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress at each stage of their education and in all subjects as a result of good and improving teaching that challenges and motivates them to succeed.
- Pupils join the school with skills and knowledge levels that are generally below those expected of their age and, in some year groups, well below expectations. They leave the school at the end of Year 6 with attainment in reading, writing and mathematics that is similar to national averages.
- Children who have started Reception in the last two years have done so with knowledge and skills that are well below what is expected of their age. Imaginative teaching and rich learning experiences have ensured that they make outstanding progress, particularly in the development of their communication and language skills. In an outstandingly taught lesson on story telling, the teacher and teaching assistants were relentless in their efforts to get all the children to think about and then connect the events in their own stories. They used toys, props and clothes to encourage their ideas and recorded their stories so the children could hear how good they were. The boys particularly enjoyed this aspect of their work.
- Excellent transition arrangements into Year 1, that help pupils get used to more formalised teaching and work that relates to the first topic in Year 1, ensure that pupils have continuity in their learning. Pupils make good progress through Years 1 and 2 and reach standards that are broadly in line with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- For the last two years, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in the phonics screening check has been below the national average. This was a result of a decision made by senior leaders and governors to maintain a very successful focus on improving reading skills using a specific reading scheme. The school has now introduced additional teaching and support of systematic phonics (the sounds that letters make), and current school data show that the proportion of pupils set to reach the expected level is on track to exceed the national average.
- Good progress continues in Key Stage 2, and the proportions of pupils who make and exceed expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics compare very favourably with national averages. This is the result of a combination of good and improving teaching and a very positive learning environment to which pupils' exceptional attitudes to learning contribute strongly.
- Effective use is made of pupil premium funding. For instance, one-to-one mentoring and precision teaching in mathematics, as well as speech and language support, have all improved pupils' progress. In 2013, there was almost no difference in the attainment of eligible pupils and other pupils in the school, and the school's own tracking data show that this is also the case in all year groups currently in the school.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are identified early, and the well-organised support they receive ensures that they make similar progress to other pupils.
- The school works very effectively with pupils whose first language is not English to quickly extend their vocabulary and give them confidence in speaking so that they are able to apply these skills successfully when working on their own. As a result, pupils who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to other pupils. Pupils from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds make similar progress as a result of the school's strong focus on equality of opportunity.

- Additional funding to support primary school sport has increased the number of pupils who take part in after-school sports clubs. It has ensured that the quality of physical education teaching has improved because specialist coaches have been working with teachers to improve their skills. Combined with an emphasis on healthy lunchboxes, this has had a marked impact on pupils' well-being.

## **The quality of teaching** is good

- The quality of teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. This is resulting in the pupils' good achievement across the school.
- Good and outstanding teaching in the Reception classes is ensuring that children are making substantial gains and accelerated progress. In a lesson to develop children's abilities to build number sentences, the teacher persistently challenged the children to extend their learning. The learning space was well structured and designed to help children's physical development and mathematical knowledge.
- Teachers make it very clear to their pupils how they want them to improve. They give very precise instructions, leaving pupils in no doubt how to proceed. They frequently draw up a list of features which should be included in a piece of work and encourage pupils to use the list to improve their work. In a lesson in Year 6 that was carefully designed to improve pupils' descriptive writing, pupils constructed their own list of pointers to success and then assessed each other's ideas against them, with the result that rapid improvements were made over the course of a single lesson.
- Teachers question pupils very effectively. This leads to higher levels of challenge for individuals and also allows the teacher to accurately assess how well the class is progressing. Teachers then adjust the work to ensure that pupils develop their skills and understanding at the best rate.
- Teachers plan work that is a good fit to pupils' starting points. They use accurate written assessment to group pupils and provide work that challenges most pupils. Sometimes, this is less successful because the work given to the most able, while allowing them to practise and use newly acquired skills, does not always extend their understanding or stretch their thinking.
- Pupils' excellent attitudes to learning are promoted by activities that they find exciting and relevant. Code breaking and 'top trumps' are used in mathematics lessons in Year 6 to capture the imagination, and pupils make rapid progress with their compact multiplication method and algebraic equations as a result.
- The basic skills are taught well across the school. Pupils read widely and often, and the pupils who met with inspectors all had their own reading books as well as the books they read for school. Pupils' books show that they often write extended pieces in science, history and other subjects, and teachers take care to correct errors in their writing as well as the subject content.
- Pupils and the parents to whom inspectors spoke as they dropped their children off for school are appreciative of the marking that gives pupils clear feedback on the quality of their work. It is regular and extensive and provides additional tasks to help pupils to improve their work. However, these tasks are not consistently set and they are often not checked by the teacher to make sure that the pupil has made the improvements suggested.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils feel secure and confident, and develop mature attitudes to learning. They reflect the school's caring ethos and high expectations in their exceptionally positive attitudes, high levels of respect for adults and other pupils and courtesy to visitors.
- Pupils never give up in lessons and recognise that failing is part of learning. They persevere with problems and help and challenge each other to succeed. They understand the link between positive attitudes and effective learning. Pupils are keen to talk about their work and take great pride in what they have done. Their books are well presented, and they take time to improve their handwriting.
- Pupils arrive punctually and are ready to learn. They told inspectors that learning new things is what is fun about coming to school and in lessons this is reflected in the way they listen, ask questions and take a genuine interest not only in the work presented to them but also in the wider world around them.
- Well-established routines ensure that pupils respond extremely positively to teachers' requests and instructions. Where teachers ensure that pupils understand the importance of responding to their marking, they make corrections and complete new tasks and make rapid gains in their learning.
- The school is tidy and pupils move around the corridors and halls purposefully and politely. They are very smart in their uniforms and look after the fabric of the school. On the playground, pupils play energetically and treat each other with kindness and care.
- Attendance has improved significantly since the previous inspection and is now above average. This is the result of consistent application of clear policies that have had a strong impact on the small number of families where attendance was persistently low.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of what constitutes bullying in its different forms, including racism and cyber-bullying. They say that bullying is very rare and this is confirmed by the school's well-kept records. There are very few incidents of poor behaviour and the number of exclusions is well below the national average.
- The school's curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to explore their understanding of risky situations and to find out how they can keep themselves safe. Pupils lead assemblies about bullying and how to prevent it. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the school's own questionnaire agreed that the school keeps their children safe and pupils agree.

**The leadership and management are good**

- The new headteacher and her deputy headteacher have wasted no time in establishing an ambitious vision to improve the school. They have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and use this to prioritise actions that are designed to have the maximum impact on pupils' progress.
- Senior leaders make rigorous checks on the quality of teaching, regularly examine pupils' work and meet frequently with teachers to discuss how best to support and challenge any pupils who may be underachieving. As a result, problems are identified early and extra help is provided

quickly.

- Support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is led and managed exceptionally well. A highly motivated team of teachers and teaching assistants is deployed systematically to provide carefully planned support to individuals and groups of pupils, both within lessons and through additional precision teaching and small-group teaching. The impact of their work is checked regularly and improvements made to ensure that pupils make the best possible progress and are well prepared for the next steps in their education. The same team provides the very effective support that ensures that pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding make good progress and attain as well as other pupils.
- The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are outstanding. Assessment is rigorous and children's progress is tracked very carefully and documented thoroughly. Parents are fully informed at all times, and the learning environment has been improved since the previous inspection so that children now have a rich and stimulating learning environment to explore.
- Teachers' performance is managed well. Teachers themselves value the process that sets challenging personal targets for the outcomes of their pupils and provides high-quality training and coaching to help them improve their skills. Teachers work in 'triads' to develop their teaching skills. They plan together and observe each other's lessons to give useful feedback on what can be improved.
- Subject leaders and senior teachers have targets designed to improve their leadership skills, supported by training and coaching from senior leaders. They provide good support to teachers, and particularly newly qualified teachers, and are strongly focused on improving the quality of teaching.
- The 'Yardley Primary Curriculum' has been created, and is continually adapted, to meet the specific needs of the groups of pupils in the school. It does this successfully and provides rich learning experiences which enthuse and interest pupils. Pupils enjoy the many activities that take them outside the school or bring visitors in to meet them, and these add to the strong promotion of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The local authority provides minimal support to the school, although it did challenge the school over its below-average phonics screening check results.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors provide good challenge to the school and hold its leaders accountable for its performance. They are aware of how well the school is doing because they understand the performance data and visit the school regularly to see how well plans for improvement are being implemented. They have a clear understanding of the quality of teaching in different parts of the school and know the steps which are taken to improve teachers' skills. They ensure that any salary increases are directly linked to teachers' performance. The governing body is able to give examples of the impact of the pupil premium funding on eligible pupils' achievement and is aware of the key priorities for the use of the primary school sport funding. Governors ensure that the budget is well spent, and that the school's arrangements for safeguarding meet current national requirements.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	133996
<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	440644

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

<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>	724
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Heather West
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gaynor Moore
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 September 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 464 3235
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