

Yew Tree Community Junior and Infant School (NC)

Yew Tree Road, Aston, Birmingham, B6 6RX

Inspection dates 12–13 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children get a good start to school life in the early years classes. Staff create a safe, caring atmosphere where children settle in quickly and enjoy their learning.
- Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2, particularly in writing. Standards have risen considerably since the school's previous inspection.
- All groups of pupils achieve well, but very effective help and guidance ensure that disadvantaged pupils do particularly well throughout the school.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well. They are polite, respectful and considerate to each other, and try extremely hard in lessons.
- Pupils feel completely safe in school and have an acute sense of how to keep themselves safe in different situations beyond school.
- The headteacher ensures that the quality of teaching and learning improves year on year. Leaders rigorously check pupils' progress and take prompt action to address any dips in attainment.
- Leaders make sure that pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They ensure that pupils are kept safe and learn in a secure environment.
- Governors are very supportive and well informed. They ask challenging questions to hold leaders accountable for improving the school and visit often to see for themselves how it is doing.
- Staff develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness extremely well. Adults act as excellent role models in the way they treat pupils and each other. The school's rules of 'Learn, Care, Respect, Be Safe' underpin all its work.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- When pupils are taught in ability groups, the more-able pupils within these groups do not always make the rapid progress they could.
- While recent changes to the way reading is taught have raised standards, some pupils are not yet given enough help to interpret underlying meanings in complex texts.
- Some subject leaders do not have a clear enough overview of teaching and learning across the school to enable them to take the initiative and drive further improvements.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils’ learning in 23 lessons, five of which were seen together with the headteacher or an assistant headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and other staff, two groups of pupils, five governors, the school improvement adviser and a representative of the local authority.
- Informal discussions were held with parents and pupils.
- There were not enough responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, for the results to display but inspectors took account of the school’s own parental questionnaires and the 35 completed staff questionnaires.
- Pupils in Year 6 were taking their Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) during the inspection.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work and reviewed a range of documentation including: the school’s checks on its performance; its analysis and tracking of pupils’ progress; records of behaviour and safety; school improvement plans; records relating to classroom observations and the management of staff performance; safeguarding arrangements; and records of meetings of the governing body.
- The inspectors also looked at pupils’ work, listened to pupils read and checked information on attendance.

Inspection team

Susan Hughes, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Janet Baker

Additional Inspector

David Westall

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Children in the early years start either full-time or part-time in a Nursery class in the year in which they are three. They then move to a full-time Reception class at the beginning of the year in which they are five.
- The very large majority of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and speak English as an additional language. Most pupils are from Pakistani or Bangladeshi backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority, is well above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and achievement by:
 - enhancing the way reading is taught, especially to develop pupils' skills in interpreting more complex texts
 - giving the more-able pupils, particularly those in the middle-ability groups, challenging work so they make even better progress.
- Strengthen leadership and management by ensuring that subject leaders take full responsibility for driving improvement throughout the school.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Under the inspirational leadership of the headteacher, good teaching throughout the school enables pupils to thrive and achieve well, not just academically but also in their behaviour and attitudes to learning. The headteacher's calm, supportive manner encourages staff to strive to improve their practice and to provide the best opportunities they can for the pupils. The headteacher and senior leaders rigorously check how well pupils are doing. Any at risk of falling behind are speedily helped to keep up.
- Leaders regularly review how well different subjects are taught. They recently identified that the teaching of reading could be improved and have made changes that are already beginning to raise achievement in all year groups.
- Leaders' appraisal system, which rewards teachers with a pay rise when their pupils achieve well, is contributing to the good teaching. Staff understand what is expected of them and are well supported in achieving their challenging targets through extra training or by receiving help from colleagues.
- Subject leaders advise staff on how they can improve their teaching techniques and work effectively alongside them to demonstrate new approaches. Some leaders, however, have not yet developed a clear enough overview of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility to initiate and drive improvements throughout all areas of the school.
- The school has formed strong partnerships with other local schools. This enables members of staff to share each other's expertise and develop their own skills. It also gives pupils opportunities to work with, or compete against, pupils from other schools.
- The school uses the primary physical education and sport premium well to support pupils' participation in sports and competitions. It funds membership of sporting partnerships and the employment of specialist coaches and teachers, who work alongside staff to help them improve their physical education teaching skills as well as providing high quality coaching for pupils. During the inspection, Year 1 pupils benefited from specialist dance teaching as they learnt some ballroom dance moves in connection with their study of *Beauty and the Beast*. The coaches also run after-school and lunchtime clubs to encourage more pupils to take part in physical activities. As a result pupils' skills have improved and the school currently holds the Aston Schools League football championship trophy.
- Leaders use the pupil premium particularly effectively to support disadvantaged pupils and make sure that they achieve at least as well as other pupils. Most of the funding is spent on additional staff so that pupils learn in smaller groups and with additional adult support during English and mathematics lessons.
- The curriculum is good. The subjects pupils study are interesting and exciting. They practise skills learnt in mathematics and literacy lessons regularly in different subjects. For example, as part of their 'going for green' ecological topic, Year 4 conducted a survey of how pupils travel to school and investigated the most useful way of showing this mathematically. When studying the English Civil War, they practised letter-writing skills by imagining they were a soldier writing home.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is promoted well throughout the curriculum. In religious education pupils learn about different faiths and cultures and the importance of respecting others' views and beliefs. The school rules are displayed around the school and pupils refer to them frequently in lessons and discussions. They support the school's drive to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils and to tackle discrimination.
- Pupils develop their listening and reasoning skills through discussing moral issues as they form coherent arguments. For example, Year 5 pupils discussed the value of a good education for all, particularly for girls, whose education is not always valued as highly as that of boys in some countries. While all pupils learn about famous British people who demonstrate high values and aspirations, pupils in Year 6 discussed 'Super Scientists' who inspire them to work hard. Such activities help to develop pupils' love for learning

and prepare them well for life in modern Britain.

- The school gives parents a wide range of opportunities to be involved in their children's learning. Regular parental workshops are well attended and parents feel informed. As a result, they are eager to support the school. For example, when pupils in Year 2 learnt about being outdoors in the dark, teachers organised an evening walk in the park so that they could experience it for themselves. All pupils were supported by their parents so that the event could happen successfully and safely.
- Leaders ensure that the school's safeguarding arrangements are robust and effective and meet statutory requirements. All staff are highly trained on safeguarding issues and any concerns about pupils' well-being are rigorously followed up.
- The local authority has rightly assessed that the school is providing a good education for its pupils and does not require any additional support. However, it checks periodically to make sure that the school is continuing to improve. The school improvement adviser works effectively with the headteacher and other leaders to develop their skills and make sure that assessments are accurate.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has recently reviewed its members' skills to ensure that they are used effectively to support the school. Governors attend training and briefing sessions regularly so they keep up to date and are well informed. As a result, governors are prepared well to ask leaders challenging questions, both during meetings and when visiting the school, to make sure that it is improving and to see for themselves.
 - Governors use performance data confidently to check that achievement is equally good for all groups of pupils. They know that the pupil premium is used particularly effectively to help disadvantaged pupils achieve well, and how the primary physical education and sports premium is increasing pupils' opportunities to take part in sports and improving their skills.
 - Governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching. They make sure that the appraisal system only rewards teachers whose pupils achieve well, and that support is provided for any teachers who underperform or need help to enable them to meet their challenging individual targets.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are courteous and considerate to adults and each other. They follow the excellent role models of staff, who treat all pupils, and each other, with respect. Throughout the school pupils are encouraged to show good manners. From the Nursery upwards they respond well, offering each other help and giving thanks for courtesies received.
- Older pupils set a good example for others as they move around the school in a calm, purposeful way. They keep an eye out for younger pupils and take their role as the senior members of the school very seriously. In the breakfast club before school, pupils of all ages get on well and play harmoniously together.
- Pupils try hard to follow the school rules, which are simple and easy to remember. In lessons teachers encourage pupils to offer advice to their classmates but not to do too much by completing tasks for them, and pupils respond maturely and sensitively. For example, when some pupils in Year 3 had difficulty using tablet computers to create a program, other pupils demonstrated on their own equipment or clearly explained the next step rather than taking control of the tablet.
- Pupils are extremely enthusiastic about their learning. They told inspectors that they enjoy coming to school because it helps them learn, and this will help them in their adult life. They said that they enjoy being challenged and demonstrated this in lessons. Pupils said they especially enjoy finding things out for themselves and being able to explain their ideas.
- While a few pupils find behaving well difficult, disruptions to lesson are extremely rare. This is because they respond to the consistent use of the behaviour policy, which rewards good behaviour but teaches

that there are consequences to poorer behaviour. Pupils told inspectors that the calm, orderly atmosphere during the inspection was typical of lessons every day. All of the parents spoken to, and those who completed the school's questionnaire, agreed that pupils behave well and achieve well in school.

- Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in the year-on-year improvements in attendance. The staff work closely with parents to encourage good attendance. As a result, the vast majority of pupils arrive punctually and are ready and keen to start work as soon as they get to school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils say they feel completely safe in school because they know that the site is secure and the adults are always there to help them and look after them.
- Pupils demonstrate safe practices in lessons and around school. From children in the early years using scissors through to Year 6 pupils in sports and science lessons, they play and use equipment safely. At playtimes, whether taking part in active games or using outdoor play and climbing equipment, they are mindful of other pupils and make sure that their actions do not hinder or endanger others.
- Pupils understand what bullying is and the different forms it can take. They told inspectors that bullying hardly ever happens at Yew Tree. Those spoken to were unaware of any incidents but were confident that if they did have any problems there was always someone they could go to and it would be sorted out. Pupils spoke confidently about the school rules of respect and kindness and explained that following these rules helps to prevent incidents of bullying from occurring. Parents and staff all agree that the school is a safe, happy place.
- Pupils benefit from extensive opportunities to learn how to keep themselves safe beyond school. As a result, they are very knowledgeable about how to use the internet safely and why precautions are necessary. They understand about road safety, fire safety, how to spot and avoid hazards at home and when it is unsafe to speak to strangers. Older pupils learn how to avoid inappropriate or uncomfortable situations with other adults, and how to share any concerns they may have.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers are enthusiastic and keen for pupils to do well. They ask searching questions to check pupils' understanding, often followed by further questions that help deepen pupils' knowledge. For example, pupils in Year 5 were encouraged to 'give me more' information about who would benefit from non-chronological writing, and why. The teacher's enthusiasm for language excited the pupils as they learnt where the term 'chronology' comes from and how they could construct high quality texts of their own.
- The pupil premium is used to employ additional teachers and other adults so that pupils can be taught literacy and mathematics in small groups. Teaching assistants work ably alongside class teachers to make sure that disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve at least as well as other pupils. Adults are well briefed and follow the good role models of teachers in asking questions that guide pupils and support their learning without them becoming too dependent on adult help.
- Writing is taught exceptionally well throughout the school. Reception children learn to use their skills in phonics (the sounds letters represent in words) to spell increasingly complex word and write sentences. During the inspection, some pupils spelt 'starlight' and many pupils showed how they could write sentences of five or six words.
- Teachers plan carefully to make sure pupils build up strong writing and grammar skills as they move through the school. Through talking and learning actions to accompany the words, pupils develop a wide vocabulary, which they use in their writing. Many pupils reach levels higher than those expected for their age by the time they leave the school.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are taught well. The system of talking and acting out

what they want to say helps them to acquire English language skills quickly so that they can make good progress alongside their classmates.

- Mathematics is taught well. Teachers' good subject knowledge enables them to build on the skills pupils already know and move them rapidly on in their learning. For example, when teaching pupils in Year 2 how to use inverse operations of addition and subtraction, the teacher quickly identified those who were ready to move on to work on their own and helped others who were less confident. Teachers expect pupils to explain their calculations to check their understanding and develop their mathematical vocabulary. This was clearly evident during a Year 1 lesson where pupils explained to each other how they could record seven multiplied by two in different ways.
- The school has refined and improved the way it teaches reading. Pupils are encouraged to read widely and more often. As a result their enthusiasm for reading is developing well across the school, standards are rising and pupils are making good progress. The changes are quite recent, however. This means that the skills required to interpret complex texts are new to some pupils, who still have difficulty in understanding and appreciating how authors imply or hint at meanings and do not always get enough help to overcome these barriers to learning.
- Teachers show that they have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Work is well planned to enable pupils to make rapid progress. The most able pupils attain levels well above their age, especially in writing and mathematics. Occasionally, however, the more-able pupils in some learning groups, particularly those for pupils of middle ability, find aspects of the work easy and so do not make the more rapid progress of which they are capable.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Many children start at the school with personal, social, emotional and language skills that are below the levels typical for their age. They make good progress in developing all their skills, even though the proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the time they leave the early years classes is below average.
- Good progress continues throughout Key Stage 1. The results of the most recent check on how well Year 1 pupils understand phonics were above average and improved on the previous year. By the end of the key stage, pupils attain broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014, pupils did particularly well in writing, reaching above-average standards. Their standards in mathematics were broadly average. Slow progress in reading since leaving Key Stage 1, however, resulted in pupils attaining below-average standards. Changes to the way reading is taught have improved achievement in reading throughout the school and pupils are now making much better progress. Pupils currently in Year 6 are reading at, or above, the levels expected for their age.
- Disadvantaged pupils make especially good progress. In 2014, those in Year 6 were slightly ahead of their classmates in mathematics and writing, and nearly a term and a half ahead in reading. They were roughly a term behind other pupils nationally in mathematics, one and a half terms behind in reading and a term ahead in writing. Disadvantaged pupils currently in the school are making at least as much progress as other pupils, and in many cases better progress. There is typically very little difference in attainment between the two groups, and where any small gaps do exist they are rapidly narrowing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Their needs are quickly identified and appropriate support is provided to enable them to achieve well alongside their peers. Pupils who speak English as an additional language also progress well, and quickly learn enough English to achieve well in line with their classmates throughout the school.
- The most able pupils achieve similarly well. The proportion of pupils who attained the highest levels at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014 was above average in mathematics and writing. More pupils are now also attaining higher levels in reading.

The early years provision is good

- The early years staff create a safe, caring and vibrant environment in which children thrive and do well. Children quickly learn to take turns, share toys and listen to each other's ideas. They behave exceptionally well, responding positively to adults' encouragement to treat each other with respect and kindness. For example, during the inspection a group of boys creating a car from a large cardboard box reflected on how it could be improved and listened attentively to each other's ideas.
- Teaching is good and activities build on children's enthusiasm, encouraging them to be inquisitive and eager to learn. During the inspection children enjoyed investigating cooking in their 'muddy kitchen' while others were fascinated to study insects and butterflies. Adults in all the early years classes ask questions skilfully to help children explain their learning and develop their language skills.
- The early years leader is highly skilled and knowledgeable. She rigorously checks that children are progressing well and adapts activities to suit their needs and interests when necessary. Any children who have special educational needs are quickly identified and good support is provided to make sure they get an equally good start to school life. The leader and staff have developed strong relationships with parents, who regularly attend workshops on how to support their children's learning at home.
- While children's skills are still slightly below the levels typical for their age when they move into Key Stage 1, they have started to develop exceptionally good attitudes to learning. This prepares them well for their move to Year 1.

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

Unique reference number	103259
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	461827

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	518
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nasir Awan
Headteacher	Shaukat Islam
Date of previous school inspection	22 September 2011
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