

# Yorkmead Junior and Infant School

York Road, Hall Green, Birmingham, West Midlands B28 8BB

## Inspection dates

11–12 October 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The recently appointed headteacher and his deputy have quickly and effectively turned around a decline in the quality of teaching. As a result, teaching has improved further since the previous inspection.
- Teachers know their pupils very well. This means they tailor lessons to suit each individual pupil. This is why pupils make good progress.
- Pupils make good progress across the school in a wide range of subjects. As a result, standards are back to where they should be after a dip in recent years.
- Children in the early years settle quickly into school life. They are taught well. Consequently, they make good progress in all areas of learning.
- The school promotes pupils' personal development and welfare very well. Pupils are happy, confident and self-assured. They are becoming well prepared for the responsibilities and opportunities of adult life.
- Pupils behave well at all times. They are courteous to adults and to each other. They work hard in lessons and play together happily at breaktimes.
- Some aspects of leadership are exceptionally effective. The senior team is highly skilled at bringing about necessary improvements. They identify with pinpoint accuracy what needs to change and work with drive and determination to make it happen.
- Subject leaders contribute well to improving the quality of teaching. As a result, outcomes for pupils are good and improving further, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Other aspects of leadership are not as effective. For example, governors do not have as detailed a view of the school's effectiveness as they should do. As a result, governors do not challenge senior leaders well enough to hold them sharply to account for the quality of education. Leadership in some areas lacks the same high degree of strategic vision and drive as is shown by the senior team.

## Full report

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

- Ensure that all leaders reflect equally well the vision, drive, determination and skills to provide the highest quality of education that is shown by senior leaders, by making sure that:
  - governors use accurate knowledge about the strengths and weaknesses of the school to hold senior leaders sharply to account
  - leadership at all levels, including in the early years, is equally effective in identifying and bringing about necessary improvements without the direct supervision of the senior team.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Since he became acting headteacher in January 2017, the headteacher has taken decisive and effective action to improve the quality of education provided by the school. This is because he is determined that every pupil deserves nothing but the very best. After being appointed to the role permanently in April, he has created a highly effective senior team. This team shares his vision and is systematically putting into place everything it sees as necessary to achieve this ambition.
- The headteacher's first priority was to tackle any weaknesses in the quality of teaching. He has done so quickly and effectively. He and his senior team hold teachers closely to account for the progress of their pupils. Effective training and support are provided if needed. Teachers must show this is making a difference. This is why the quality of teaching has further improved since the previous inspection.
- The next planned improvements are set out in a detailed plan. Actions chosen are designed clearly to make a difference to pupils' outcomes in a range of subjects. The implementation of this plan is in its early stages. Nevertheless, the actions are already making a big difference. For example, the new approach to teaching handwriting is working well. Pupils' books show an impressive degree of improvement in the few weeks since the beginning of term.
- An important development is the design and implementation of a system that tracks pupils' achievement. The new approach generates extremely useful data about pupils' progress. As a result, leaders are able to analyse the information to spot even more quickly any pupils who may be falling behind. This system has been introduced very recently. Consequently, only a limited amount of information is available to date. More is being generated all the time. Therefore, senior leaders are building an accurate picture of pupils' outcomes which they intend to share frequently with governors.
- Pupils describe the school's curriculum as 'inspiring'. They spoke animatedly to inspectors about the rich experiences they have. Leaders ensure that pupils have opportunities to excel in many ways. For example, all pupils learn at least one musical instrument and have the chance to perform in public. The curriculum explicitly promotes pupils' problem-solving and research skills. Similarly, pupils' self-awareness, social skills and knowledge about how to stay safe are built effectively through different subjects.
- The curriculum and the wider work of the school promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding very well. For example, Year 6 pupils are able to discuss issues such as mental health and forced marriage sensitively, knowledgeably and confidently. Similarly, the many opportunities to take on responsibility develop pupils' leadership skills and prepare them for the world of work.
- Leaders ensure that the culture of the school strongly promotes equality. The school's values are based firmly around this principle. Pupils follow a structured programme of activities to promote their understanding of the Equality Act. This supports leaders' zero tolerance of discriminatory attitudes or behaviour.

- Subject leaders support senior leaders well in improving the quality of teaching. They keep a check on standards in their subject and take effective action when needed. For example, new approaches to the teaching of mathematics and writing have increased teachers' confidence and skills. This is why outcomes in these subjects are improving.
- Leaders use additional funding from the government well. They make sure the money benefits the particular pupils it is intended for. Senior leaders keep a critical eye on what difference the funds are making. They are quick to change their spending plans if actions are not working well enough. This is why disadvantaged pupils are beginning to catch up with other pupils nationally. Similarly, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress towards attaining appropriate standards for their ages.
- Leaders have used the primary school sport premium to improve activity rates for pupils and to promote healthy lifestyles. The quality of physical education has improved. Pupils are active in sports lessons and at playtimes. They know about the benefits of exercise and adopting a healthy diet.
- Senior leaders have not been able to fully devolve some aspects of leadership. This is because some leaders are less skilled at identifying and implementing improvements in their areas of responsibility. Senior leaders are working effectively to drive the necessary actions and to improve the skills of these staff where needed.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors are supportive of the school's work and ambitious for pupils to do well. However, governors' effectiveness is limited. This is because they do not know enough about the school's strengths and weaknesses. This means that they cannot ask sufficiently challenging questions to hold senior leaders to account.
- Governors have received relevant training to improve their understanding of how to keep pupils safe. They have not been trained in other aspects of their role, such as in how to oversee school improvement. This is why they do not fully understand how to carry out some of their responsibilities.
- The headteacher has improved the quality of information available to governors. This is helping them to build a more accurate picture of the school's effectiveness. He is also supporting governors in knowing how to unpick information about pupils' progress and what questions they might ask about it. As a result, governance is improving.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils' welfare is at the core of the school's priorities, so all staff are vigilant in order to identify and minimise any risk to pupils' safety.
- Staff are well trained in spotting concerns and in knowing how to respond. Well-established processes ensure that concerns are dealt with swiftly and appropriately. The school works closely with outside agencies, when necessary, to ensure that the right support is given to families who need help.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils get on well with their teachers. This helps pupils feel safe to challenge themselves. As a result, they enjoy lessons and work hard. These strong relationships provide the basis for effective teaching across the school.
- Teachers know their pupils very well. They accurately assess what each pupil can do. This helps teachers plan activities that are well matched to pupils' abilities. In this way, teachers systematically build pupils' knowledge and skills.
- Teachers ensure that lesson time is used well. Lessons get off to a prompt start and proceed swiftly. This means that no learning time is lost.
- Teachers have changed the way they teach writing this year. This has led to a big improvement in the quality of pupils' work. Teachers show pupils the best way to construct different types of writing. This helps pupils tackle their work confidently. It also helps the most able pupils to spot ways in which their writing could be improved.
- The approach to teaching mathematics is relatively new. Teachers are increasingly successful at developing pupils' mathematical thinking. Pupils' work shows they are becoming adept at applying their number knowledge to solve increasingly complex mathematical challenges.
- Teachers ensure that pupils know how to complete work successfully. They show exactly what a good piece of work will look like, then guide pupils skilfully to achieve the expected standard. The school's policy is to give precise feedback along the way and to write comments in pupils' books afterwards. This helps pupils know how they are doing and how to make improvements.
- Teachers throughout the school place great emphasis on developing pupils' communication skills. As a result, pupils learn to speak confidently in public situations and to listen well to each other. This benefits pupils who speak English as an additional language in particular, as it helps them to learn the language quickly.
- Teachers are skilled at using questions to support and challenge pupils. They guide pupils to explain what is in their head and then probe further. This helps pupils clarify their knowledge and leads to deeper understanding.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. This is because pupils' welfare and happiness are seen to be of utmost importance. Therefore, staff do all they can to secure pupils' well-being. As a result, pupils enjoy coming to school and are happy, confident learners.
- Pupils' self-confidence and enjoyment of learning is evident. They work hard in lessons and are keen to talk about their work. They are proud of their own efforts and quick to praise others for trying hard.
- The school provides lots of opportunities for pupils to experience genuine responsibility. Pupils relish these. For example, Year 6 pupils love having 'work

experience' in the early years, where they support children's learning in the outdoor area. Similarly, the school council was involved in signing off the new anti-bullying policy. Pupils become involved in meaningful research projects that make important contributions to the running of the school.

- Pupils show genuine interest in and respect for diversity. They learn about different beliefs and ways of life. They celebrate a wide range of festivals and regularly visit different places of worship.
- Pupils have a strong sense of morality. They understand the difference between right and wrong and accept that actions bring consequences. As a result, the school is a harmonious community where each individual feels valued.
- Pupils know what to do to keep themselves safe in school and beyond. They say they rarely experience bullying. When it does happen, they trust staff to help them. Pupils are taught about the dangers of online activity and know what steps they can take to protect themselves.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They conduct themselves well in lessons and around the school. They are friendly to one another and polite to adults.
- A new system for managing pupils' behaviour in lessons has recently been introduced. Teachers use it very well to reward pupils for behaving well or giving a reminder when needed. Pupils know exactly how it works and understand what will happen if they misbehave. Teachers rarely need to use the sanctions because pupils behave well.
- Breaktimes are fun. Pupils play happily together. If they do fall out, there is always someone on hand to help sort things out. This includes the Year 5 'play leaders' who are worthy ambassadors of the school's values. They make a big contribution to pupils' enjoyment of playtime.
- School staff work hard to improve the attendance of some pupils. While most pupils attend regularly, some parents take their children on holiday during school time, or allow them to stay off school without good reason. The new headteacher now makes it very clear that this is not acceptable and takes strong action against parents who allow their children to be absent persistently. Little by little, this is working.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Many pupils have difficulties with communication when they join the school. Many speak English as an additional language. A notable proportion start school with particular weaknesses in speaking, listening and understanding. The strong emphasis placed on helping pupils overcome these difficulties makes a big difference to their outcomes. Pupils learn to use and understand spoken and written English effectively.
- Pupils make good progress across a range of subjects in most classes. National assessments in Year 2 and Year 6 show that pupils catch up from weak beginnings as they move through the school.

- In recent years, there have been dips in attainment to below national averages in some subjects. However, pupils' books show that this has been remedied and that pupils who are currently at the school are working at appropriate standards for their ages. This is because leaders worked out what was going wrong and took effective action. For example, the new approach to teaching mathematics is driving up pupils' attainment. It is now in line with the national average and is improving year on year.
- Pupils learn quickly to read because they are taught the basics of how to decode words effectively in the early years and key stage 1. They use this knowledge of phonics confidently to tackle new words. As they get older, pupils develop a love of reading. They enjoy sharing books and reading for themselves. Some pupils have, in the past, struggled to fully understand their books because they found it hard to work out meaning that was not explicitly written in the text. Better teaching of reading is now addressing this problem effectively.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well provided for. The carefully designed support helps them make good progress in a range of subjects.
- The pupil premium funding is targeted effectively at helping disadvantaged pupils to achieve well. As a result, disadvantaged pupils are beginning to catch up with other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The most able pupils currently in the school make good progress. This includes the most able who are disadvantaged. This is because they are given challenging work. As a result, more pupils are now demonstrating the greater depth of mathematical understanding and more sophisticated writing skills that they are capable of, given how well they have attained in the past.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- When children start school, either in the Nursery or the Reception classes, most have fewer skills than typical three- or four-year olds. Many struggle to communicate because they have underdeveloped speaking and listening skills. In addition, a large proportion also speak English as an additional language. This combination of issues creates a substantial barrier to learning. Teachers and teaching assistants in the early years work hard to help children overcome these barriers and are skilled at doing so. As a result, children get off to a good start. This lays the foundations for a successful school career.
- Teaching is good in the early years. Adults work together well to build a picture of what children can do and what will help them learn best. Children are captivated by the rich variety of interesting activities on offer. The choice of activities is selected carefully so that children practise their growing skills by exploring and finding things out for themselves.
- As a result, children make good progress in all areas of learning. By the end of the Reception Year, the majority have attained the necessary skills to equip them for the demands of Year 1. Given their low starting points, these outcomes are good.
- All adults in the early years consciously provide very good role models of effective communication. They speak using quality language. They interact very well with children when they are playing. They question children effectively when working closely

with a group. They help children to speak using full sentences and standard English. This is why children overcome their communication difficulties. It enables them to achieve well.

- Children settle very quickly into school life. They learn to get on with one another, to share, take turn and follow rules. Their behaviour is good. Watching a Reception class lining up sensibly, chatting to an inspector about what they had been learning and going off to play happily outside was a joy to behold.
- Staff make sure children are safe in the early years classes. Every day, staff check the indoor and outdoor spaces for possible hazards. They help children to handle potentially risky equipment sensibly and safely. Staff are very sensitive to children's emotions. If one is finding it difficult to say goodbye to their parent, staff calmly and kindly come to the rescue, helping the child to come into school and the parent not to worry. This exemplifies the effective arrangements for safeguarding in the early years.
- Leadership of the early years ensures that day-to-day matters are dealt with effectively and that the quality of teaching remains good. Senior leaders in the school have oversight of the strategic work that ensures the provision continually improves. However, the senior school team has to maintain more control over how this happens than they want to. This is because capacity to drive forward improvement from within the early years department is limited.



## School details

Unique reference number	103284
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10025258

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	466
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Barbara Marsh
Headteacher	Alex Newman-Smith
Telephone number	0121 464 4215
Website	<a href="http://www.yorkmead.co.uk">www.yorkmead.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:enquiry@yorkmead.bham.sch.uk">enquiry@yorkmead.bham.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	20 March 2013

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is larger than average. Pupils come from a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds. The majority speak English as an additional language.
- The current headteacher became acting headteacher in January 2017. He was appointed to the permanent post in April 2017. The deputy headteacher was appointed to the role from the beginning of this academic year.
- The school includes a nursery unit for three- and four- year olds.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was initially carried out as a one-day short inspection under Section 8 of the Education Act 2005. It was also deemed a Section 5 inspection under the same act.
- Inspectors observed learning by visiting lessons in all classes, looking at the work in pupils' books and talking to pupils about their learning.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils and spoke informally with others in lessons and at breaktimes. They heard some pupils read.
- Inspectors met with: the headteacher and deputy headteacher; other school staff; and a group of governors, including the chair.
- Inspectors spoke to parents as they dropped their children off at the start of the school day. Nine parents responded to Parent View, the online survey. Their comments were taken into account.
- The responses from 12 members of staff who completed the staff survey were considered.
- Inspectors examined a number of documents including: leaders' checks on how well the school is doing and its plans for improvement; information about the attainment and progress of current pupils; minutes of governing body meetings; and documents relating to safeguarding, pupils' attendance and their behaviour.

## Inspection team

Sandy Hayes, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Janet Satchwell	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Bandfield	Ofsted Inspector
Diana Pearce	Ofsted Inspector
Janet Satchwell, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector

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