

TLG – South East Birmingham

Yardley Wood Baptist Church, Yardley Wood Road, Yardley Wood, Birmingham B14 4BN

Inspection dates

13–15 February 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and senior leaders have a strong positive impact on the quality of provision at the school. They work exceptionally hard to improve outcomes for pupils.
- A broad, varied and interesting curriculum motivates pupils. Its focus on developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is strong and effective.
- Safeguarding is a strength of the school. Pupils feel safe at all times. This security contributes to the growing confidence that pupils show in their learning and relationships.
- The new headteacher has quickly established a cohesive teaching team. The team's skills in teaching and learning and behavioural support ensure that pupils make good progress.
- Pupils are well behaved and courteous. In the past, they have failed to progress in their previous schools. Due to the skills of the headteacher and his team, they settle down quickly and their behaviour and attendance improves.
- Members of the joint management team regularly make informal and more formal visits to the school and provide excellent support for the headteacher. However, minutes of formal meetings lack a clear focus on specific improvement actions.
- Leaders have provided good-quality training and support for staff in many areas. However, they have not provided sufficient training for those teaching staff who need to improve their confidence in curriculum subject knowledge.
- Teachers work hard to develop their pupils' spoken language and writing skills. However, pupil's use of vocabulary and extended writing is limited and, as a result, their writing is not improving fast enough.
- Teachers do not provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to develop their mathematical reasoning skills. As a result, pupils do not make enough progress in this aspect of mathematics.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership by ensuring that:
 - written records of management team meetings show clearly the necessary improvement actions
 - staff receive continual professional development in areas where their subject knowledge is less secure.
- Improve teaching by ensuring that pupils:
 - extend their knowledge and use of vocabulary
 - are encouraged to develop their extended writing skills across the curriculum
 - have more opportunities to develop their mathematical reasoning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have ensured that the school meets all of the independent school standards.
- Leaders are determined in their efforts to address the individual, social, emotional and learning needs of young people, and to develop their self-esteem.
- The proprietor and leaders have a good awareness of the school's effectiveness. They have used a clear set of priorities that have had an impact on both the emotional and academic progress of the pupils. Their self-evaluation is realistic and accurate.
- The new headteacher, who has been in this role since January 2017, has quickly created a cohesive and capable team of teaching staff.
- Staff morale is high. Relationships at all levels are very good. All staff who completed the Ofsted inspection survey indicated that they enjoy working at the school. They feel that they are well supported in their roles and personal well-being by the management.
- The school keeps excellent records of all pupils and their individual needs. Records of each pupil's behaviour and starting points are thorough and provide a reliable basis for discussing their academic and social progress.
- The school has good relationships with relevant external agencies.
- The curriculum provides pupils with a broad and balanced programme of activities. Pupils study a core curriculum of mathematics, English, science, personal, social, health and economic education (PHSE), information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education (PE), religious education (RE), music, art, independent learning, life skills and citizenship. Pupils end the year by taking entry level, level 1 and level 2 or GCSE examinations when they return to their referring schools.
- Leaders have also included in the curriculum lessons that have a significant impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. History, English and citizenship lessons are particularly well linked to SMSC development. As a result, pupils develop a secure understanding of these areas. The principle of equality of opportunity is realised. The school promotes well the British values of tolerance and respect. Discrimination is not tolerated and is explored fully. The minister of Yardley Wood Baptist Church provides spiritual support for the teaching staff.
- Leaders have ensured that a variety of good-quality safeguarding policies are displayed on the school website. The safeguarding and child protection policy is effective and meets current government requirements.
- Leaders have put in place assessment procedures to ensure that pupils' progress is effectively monitored and recorded in English and mathematics. A new assessment procedure is being trialled that records progress in all subjects across the curriculum. Teaching plans ensure that they cater for the individual needs of pupils well. Learning support assistants receive detailed information about each individual pupil's needs to support their work.
- Leaders have created good relationships with parents and carers of the pupils who attend the school. All parents spoken to by the inspector were enthusiastic about their child's progress since joining the school. A typical comment from a parent was: 'The

understanding the team have of the pupils and the interaction they have with them has been brilliant. Their understanding of my child and his emotional well-being is exceptional.'

- The headteacher has created exceptionally good relationships with the leadership of the base schools and the local authority programme director for 'Education Extra'. They hold the school in high regard.
- Leaders have ensured that the school's accessibility plan meets all the requirements of the 2010 Equality Act.
- Strong collaboration with the teaching and learning leader, as well as the support manager from TLG, has had a significant impact on the progress that pupils make. They support the headteacher with targets for improvement. He in turn supports his staff with their own termly 'success plans'. A programme of lesson monitoring by the teaching and learning leader from TLG supports teaching staff to improve their skills. He has also developed a useful self- and peer-evaluation tool that enables staff to evaluate their own teaching. However, due to the small numbers of staff, teachers are sometimes required to teach subjects where they do not have sufficient expertise. For this reason, the teaching team still requires further support with subject knowledge in lessons where they feel less secure.

Governance

- The joint management team includes senior members of TLG and Yardley Wood Baptist Church; they provide good support and challenge for the headteacher. However, the records of formal meetings lack a clear focus on what improvement actions have been agreed and an evaluation of their impact on the provision.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are strong. The leaders have created a strong culture of shared responsibility for protecting pupils and this permeates all areas of the school's work. All staff know the designated safeguarding leader to contact if they have concerns about pupils. They are all appropriately trained in all aspects of safeguarding. Leaders are tenacious in following up concerns and ensuring that they inform outside agencies when a pupil is at risk or missing from education. Appropriate records are kept that detail safeguarding concerns and actions. Staff are well trained to recognise signs of extremism and radicalisation.
- The headteacher has created excellent links between the school and its base schools. As a result, both schools are immediately aware of pupils who are late or absent. The school takes prompt action to find out the whereabouts of any pupil who does not arrive at the appropriate time.
- The school occupies part of the Yardley Wood Church building. It is a modern, well-maintained building with high standards of cleanliness and safety measures. Fire evacuation routes are clearly indicated. The building is regularly checked for fire risk and other safety hazards. Risk assessments for all aspects of school life, and for individual pupils where necessary, are rigorously maintained. The premises meet all the independent school standards.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The calm learning environment ensures that pupils feel secure and therefore able to apply themselves to learning. Teachers care deeply about pupils' personal well-being and educational progress. Relationships between staff and pupils are based on mutual respect. All of this helps pupils to work steadily and to make good progress in most lessons.
- Teaching staff make good use of the high-quality resources they have to promote pupils' learning. Learning areas are of good quality and well resourced. Teachers use the learning areas well to provide a mix of group and individual activities that meet pupils' needs well and support their progress.
- Pupils benefit from daily independent learning lessons where they choose their own topics to research and then present their findings. As a result, they can pursue their own interests and gain confidence from sharing their specific knowledge with others.
- Teachers successfully encourage pupils to improve their reading skills, including reading aloud. They ensure that the development of reading is integrated into personalised pupil plans and into research tasks in the classroom. Teachers plan and deliver effective lessons that link reading and writing well.
- Learning support assistants provide effective support for pupils. They are well trained in the skills needed to support pupils with behavioural, emotional and mental health issues. They frequently redirect pupils whose attention may be wandering and deflect situations where emotional difficulties could cause disruption. As a result, the pupils do not disturb each other and are able to refocus on the lesson. The effective questioning skills of the learning support assistants also promote learning.
- Pupils enjoy a range of opportunities for learning in the wide-ranging curriculum. An ongoing project for citizenship involves pupils working collaboratively in pairs to create a model town. Teachers challenge pupils to decide what buildings would be needed and what rules would be required for the citizens of the town. Pupils have become extremely engaged in this project. In one town they placed a church and a mosque next to each other to promote inter-faith understanding.
- Learning about equalities is deeply embedded in the work of the school. For example, in work about the Second World War, pupils watched a film about Auschwitz that prompted them to air their views about the treatment of Jews. This work was also linked to work about Somalia, where pupils compared their own lives with the lives of a Somalian girl living in a war zone. The pupils found that their own lives are much safer than the lives of many people in Somalia or the lives of Jews in the past.
- English lessons successfully enable pupils to develop their writing and reading abilities and focus appropriately on spelling and grammar. However, for some pupils, particularly those with a limited vocabulary, teachers do not ensure that they extend their use of words well enough. Pupils do not use extended writing across the curriculum often enough.
- Mathematics teachers use resources well to engage pupils in learning. Teachers ensure that they identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and then make sure that they can apply their new skills to everyday life. However, pupils have too few opportunities to develop their mathematical reasoning.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils begin to develop greater confidence in themselves as they spend more time in the school. Pupils spoke confidently to the inspector about their social development. They told the inspector that they enjoy the opportunity to work with a small group of people, as opposed to the larger numbers in a mainstream school.
- Good transition arrangements when pupils join the school ensure that the views and wishes of pupils and parents are fully considered as they become accustomed to the new environment. The school works well with the base schools and agencies to gather important information about each pupil.
- The school is a secure environment where the pupils say that they always feel safe. Pupils' confidence grows as they become more accustomed to the fact that adults are all striving for their success and well-being. One pupil said, 'I love this school because it has changed me around from what I used to be. I can talk to the headteacher about anything.'
- Staff are highly skilled at recognising pupils' emotions and are able to pre-empt any difficulties that might occur in lessons. Pupils are offered regular opportunities for counselling before their emotions escalate. This vigilance results in a calm learning environment that promotes learning.
- The school teaches the pupils how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations and online. They know that they should tell someone whom they trust if they have any concerns about their own safety.
- Teachers encourage pupils to raise issues that affect them. They have opportunities to vote for things that are important to them. For example, they voted to give some of their fundraising money to a local charity. They also take votes on which film they would prefer to watch. In this way, they see how democracy works.
- Careers advice and guidance prepare pupils well for their future lives. Teachers provide this guidance during PHSE and citizenship lessons. They help pupils to think about what they would like to do with their lives and to realise the qualities they will need for the choices they make. The pupils spoken to by the inspector had very clear ideas about their futures.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education effectively supports pupils to develop their relationships and understanding of the community and the world. Pupils have opportunities to learn about serving the community in fundraising events for charities and in their work about creating their own town.
- Educational visits support pupils' educational and SMSC development. For example, they visited the Birmingham Science Museum Thinktank and were particularly engrossed in the display about genetics and DNA. Invited speakers stimulate development in knowledge about how to keep safe. A drugs and alcohol workshop, as well as a sex education workshop, taught them how to keep themselves safe. They also had a visit from a young man who had spent some time at this school. He told the pupils how he had turned his

life around by gaining qualifications and now works for a charity. As a result, the pupils develop a deeper understanding of issues that affect their lives as well as how difficulties can be overcome.

- The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. They learn about the law in relation to equalities, different religions and cultures and about democracy. They are knowledgeable about similarities and differences between major religious faiths.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders have developed a strong behaviour code that all pupils understand and that is used effectively. Frequent rewards for good behaviour and good working attitudes build up into more significant rewards that encourage the pupils to do well. For example, rewards have included visits to a low ropes obstacle course, trampolining, go-karting and the cinema. Pupils have clear rules to follow and good opportunities for counselling when they request it. Where pupils have been excluded for serious offences, they are supported to return to school and begin again.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are courteous and respectful to staff and visitors. On the recent visit to the Thinktank, the workshop leader praised their behaviour. School logs of behaviour show that pupils' behaviour improves the longer they are in the school. For each individual, classroom behaviour improves and there are fewer exclusions.
- The vast majority of pupils either attend regularly or have made marked improvements to their attendance since joining the school. The school works hard to improve the attendance and punctuality of the minority who do not attend regularly enough.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Most of the pupils are disadvantaged and/or have special needs. The progress they make is because of the good leadership and highly committed staff that give support to their social, mental, emotional, health and academic education. All pupils have made good progress in their emotional development.
- The vast majority of pupils have made good academic progress in English and mathematics, including those who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. This is because of the accurate assessments when pupils arrive in the school and because of each pupil's individualised learning programmes. A minority of pupils have made good progress in only one subject.
- Pupils have good opportunities to enjoy reading. They read in every lesson; some of them read for their own enjoyment. They read when they research their own projects in independent learning sessions. As a result, their progress in reading is good.
- Pupils in this school have been unable to progress in their previous schools due to their emotional and behavioural difficulties. Pupils' confidence develops the longer they are in the school. Pupils only stay in this school for a short time, no longer than one year. Previous pupils have successfully returned to their base schools, moved to further education or another school where they could take further qualifications and GCSEs. Some have gained employment.

School details

Unique reference number	139962
DfE registration number	330/6015
Inspection number	10033583

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	7
Number of part-time pupils	1
Proprietor	Yardley Wood Baptist Church
Chair	Don Russell
Headteacher	Paul Mahon
Annual fees (day pupils)	£14,352
Telephone number	0121 474 5412
Website	www.tlgsoutheastbirmingham.org.uk
Email address	paul.mahon@tlg.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–17 July 2014

Information about this school

- TLG South East Birmingham is an independent day school providing part-time and full-time education for students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. These students have been excluded or are at risk of exclusion from their mainstream schools.
- The school is located in the premises of Yardley Wood Baptist Church, Birmingham. It is run by the Yardley Wood Charitable Company in partnership with TLG, The Education Charity.
- The school is registered to admit up to nine students in the age range 11 to 16 years.

There are currently seven students on roll.

- The school provides education for four days each week and a small number of students attend for just two days. Students are dual registered and their base schools are responsible for their education on the remaining days of the week.
- The school's mission and values are based on Christian principles. It aims to tackle the issues that underpin behavioural difficulties and to develop learning skills, leading to qualifications and reintegration into schools, further education or employment.
- Off-site locations are used for some aspects of PE and outdoor activities.
- The school's leadership consists of the headteacher, working in collaboration with the proprietor and senior TLG staff. Due to the size of the school, there are no middle leaders.
- The school was registered as an independent school in July 2013, having previously operated as an education centre in the same premises. The previous inspection took place on 15–17 July, 2014.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in six lessons and scrutinised examples of pupils' work in a variety of subjects.
- The inspector interviewed three pupils and spoke to four parents on the telephone. She also took into account one written testimonial from a parent and three responses to inspection questionnaires submitted by members of staff.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, two teaching and learning assistants, the teaching and learning leader from TLG as well as the education leader for TLG, the minister of Yardley Wood Baptist Church, the chair of the management committee and the deputy headteacher of one of the base schools. She also spoke on the telephone to the programme director for 'Education Extra' in Solihull.
- The inspector scrutinised a number of school policies, procedures and records in order to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

Mary Maybank, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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