

Inspection of Yew Tree Primary School

Birchfield Way, Yew Tree Estate, Walsall, West Midlands WS5 4DX

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 October 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very proud of their school. They say that 'Our school is the best because we have a great building, we learn lots and the teachers are caring.' Pupils appreciate the warm greeting they get from staff at the start of every day. Pupils are kind towards each other. There is a friendly atmosphere around the school and visitors feel welcome.

Leaders have high expectations for every pupil in the school. The school's vision is 'learning without limits', and pupils work hard to rise to this challenge.

Leaders and staff have created a curriculum that supports pupils' learning and their wider development. This is done well. Learning takes place in the classroom, the hall, the small farm, the allotment, or further afield.

Pupils pay attention in lessons and focus on their work. They walk around the school sensibly. Pupils enjoy chatting with their friends in the dining room. They play well together on the playground. Pupils understand the different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying. Bullying is rare, but staff deal with any incidents straight away.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They appreciate the positive changes that have taken place over the last two years.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have thought carefully about the curriculum. Curriculum plans map out the knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn in each year group and in each subject. Teachers find the curriculum plans helpful. The plans help teachers to order and design lessons, so that what pupils learn today builds on what they have learned before.

In a small number of subjects, including computing, curriculum plans are relatively new. Consequently, teachers are in the early stages of delivering them. Subject leaders are clear about what improvements are needed in these curriculum areas, including support for some staff. Leaders' actions are already leading to improvements.

Teachers have good subject knowledge in a wide range of subjects. This helps them to deliver the curriculum in a purposeful and interesting way. Teachers model subject-specific vocabulary well, especially in English and mathematics. Pupils are now starting to use this vocabulary when they answer questions and explain their understanding of a concept. Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning well to check and deepen pupils' understanding and to encourage discussion between pupils.

Leaders introduced a new phonics scheme at the start of this term. The scheme maps out the order of phonics teaching across the early years, key stage 1 and beyond. Currently, not all staff have completed the training to deliver the phonics programme. As a result, not all staff teach phonics consistently well. However, leaders are addressing this effectively. Leaders have bought lots of new reading books and made sure that the books closely match pupils' phonics knowledge. This helps pupils in the early stages of reading to practise their phonics skills.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn well alongside their peers. Teachers make sure that they include pupils with SEND in lessons and all aspects of school life. If required, staff provide practical resources, extra equipment and technology to help pupils with their learning. Leaders and staff identify pupils' specific needs effectively, so that they can be met.

Pupils talk about and understand the meaning of the school's values of 'responsibility', 'respect', 'pride', 'courage' and 'ambition'. These values are part of everyday conversations between staff and pupils, and among pupils. Pupils have a growing understanding of mental health and talk about this in the context of the school's values. Pupils know about the different types of relationships and families that exist in their local community. They understand how to stay safe when working online. However, their knowledge of different faiths, beliefs and cultures is more limited.

Leaders, supported by staff, are working well to continue to improve the school. They are not complacent and are always thinking about how they can make the school even better for the pupils. Governors know the school well, including the areas for improvement that leaders are currently working on. Governors support and challenge leaders effectively.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They value the training they have received and say that it helps them to do their job better. They care about the pupils. Staff work well as a team. They value the support they get from each other and from leaders. Most staff say that their workload is manageable. They value new initiatives that help to promote their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff do everything they can to keep pupils safe. Those responsible for the leadership of safeguarding are well trained and knowledgeable. They organise regular, effective training for all staff. Leaders carry out checks to make sure that staff are clear about safeguarding procedures. Staff know what to do if they are concerned about a pupil's welfare. Support is put into place quickly. The curriculum teaches pupils how to stay safe in school and beyond the school gate. Leaders and staff are knowledgeable about local risks, such as child criminal exploitation and domestic violence.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all staff have been trained to deliver the new phonics scheme. This means there is some variation in the quality of phonics teaching for children and pupils in the early stages of reading. Leaders need to provide these staff with the support and training required, so they can deliver the phonics curriculum effectively.
- In a small number of subjects, including computing, teachers are in the early stages of delivering new curriculum plans. In these subjects, gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills are not being filled consistently well across the school. The implementation of these new curriculum plans has been affected by COVID-19-related restrictions. Leaders need to provide staff with the support they require, so they can implement the new curriculum plans effectively in these subjects.
- Some pupils' understanding of different faiths, beliefs and cultures is limited. Leaders and staff need to make sure that the curriculum develops pupils' understanding and appreciation of people who may have different values and principles to them.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	103974
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10209883
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	643
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Craig Dorham
Headteacher	Jamie Barry
Website	www.yewtreeprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 and 16 October 2019

Information about this school

- The school moved into a new building in November 2019. In September 2020, pupils and staff had full access to the newly developed grounds because the old building had been demolished.
- The school has a nursery that admits three-year-olds.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. They deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken this into account in their evaluation.
- The lead inspector held ongoing meetings with the headteacher. He met with six members of the governing body, including the chair. The lead inspector also met with a representative of the local authority.

- Inspectors held meetings with members of the safeguarding team, the early years leader, the inclusion leader and other leaders.
- As part of the inspection, the inspectors focused mainly on early reading, English, mathematics, science, computing and history. They met with subject leaders and teachers to talk about the quality of education in these subjects.
- Inspectors made visits to classrooms. Most of these visits were with subject leaders or senior leaders.
- The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils formally and informally about their learning and experiences at school. They looked at pupils' work to see how well staff implement the curriculum.
- Safeguarding documents were checked, including the checks that leaders make on staff's suitability to work with children. The inspectors checked that staff implement safeguarding policies and procedures effectively across the school.
- Inspectors talked to parents at the end of the day. The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and the free-text responses received during the inspection.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation provided by the school. This included the school's self-evaluation, school improvement plan, school policies, curriculum documents, SEND records, behaviour records, published information about pupils' performance and minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors looked at information published on the school's website.

Inspection team

Wayne Simner, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Michael Onyon	Ofsted Inspector
Stephanie Moran	Her Majesty's Inspector
Julie Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector

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