

# Yenton Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	133729
<b>Local Authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	328738
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 July 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Canham

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<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 on roll</b>	
School (total)	301
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Cronin
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Williams
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 June 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Chester Road Erdington Birmingham B24 0ED
<b>Telephone number</b>	01214 646588
<b>Fax number</b>	01214 648532

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 July 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Approximately two thirds of the pupils at Yenton come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds and almost a third are from families of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage into one of two Reception classes at the start of the school year.

There is a pre-school care provision, day nursery and an out-of-school club within the school grounds, which are not managed by the governors and are inspected separately.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school where pupils achieve well. The school has a number of outstanding features, including the high quality of guidance and support, the exemplary behaviour of its pupils and their enjoyment of lessons and activities. Colourful illustrations and themes, painted on the school's internal walls, are indicative of the school's commitment to providing a curriculum that is successfully balanced to be both creative and yet focus on basic skills in literacy and numeracy.

The school has made many strides since the last inspection. Through resourceful leadership, the headteacher has sharpened the effectiveness of the senior management team. For example, key staff have greater responsibility for monitoring subjects and paying closer attention to the progress of pupils. Important outcomes are the improved quality of teaching, which is good, and faster progress. As a result, challenging targets for improvement have been exceeded, and standards in Year 6 have been lifted in English, mathematics and science. This achievement has been made possible with close support from governors and strong teamwork amongst staff. Knowledgeable governors share in the school's vision and expectations. The school's accurate self-evaluation is based on systematic monitoring and continuous review. The success of the school's leadership is valued by parents, who are very supportive of the school. The school has been very effective in reaching out to local communities and has developed strong links with a number of outside agencies.

From starting in the Reception class with skills that are below those levels typical for their age, all pupils make good progress as they move through the school. Pupils work exceptionally well in groups and independently. These strong features have a positive influence on pupils' progress and, as a result, standards are above average by the end of Year 6. These standards are underpinned by the significant proportions of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in mathematics, science and reading. A relative weakness in writing is already being tackled by the school with a number of initiatives, including more opportunities for writing across subjects. Pupils' good progress reflects the positive picture of teaching that successfully takes account of the wide range of abilities. Well-crafted support ensures that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress in line with their peers.

Staff are focused on ensuring the highest possible quality of support for the pupils. The fostering of respect and care is at the heart of the supportive, welcoming and stimulating environment. Consequently, pupils have outstanding attitudes to school and behaviour is exemplary. Attendance is average, although a small but significant minority of pupils persistently arrive late to school.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children make a good start to their learning in Reception, where they benefit from a stimulating and positive learning atmosphere, which includes a spacious outdoor area. Children make good progress from their starting points. As a result of good teaching, which includes activities well matched to the children's abilities, they are well prepared for their entry into Year 1 with standards that are broadly average. The well-planned curriculum ensures that children benefit from using indoor and outdoor areas. However, the school acknowledges the need to make better use of the outside area to increase the opportunities for imaginative play.

Activities include a good mixture of teacher-led tasks alongside opportunities for children to explore and investigate for themselves, such as making models of gingerbread men. Consequently, children gain much confidence in their own abilities. There are many opportunities for children to play together, explore, work cooperatively within groups, and to learn how to behave very well. These strategies successfully promote children's personal and social development and their interest in learning. Children's attitudes are very good and they enjoy organising themselves and showing what they can do.

Good leadership and management ensure that close monitoring of how children are learning makes certain that activities build positively on what they already know and can do. Assessment information is also used very well by staff to identify particular needs and help provide children with strong pastoral guidance and support.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that pupils are given sufficient opportunities to develop and consolidate their writing skills across all subjects to raise standards, especially at the higher levels.
- Work more closely with parents to increase attendance and improve punctuality.

### **Achievement and standards**

#### **Grade: 2**

Standards are above average overall by the end of Year 6. However, this picture masks variations in standards between subjects. Significant proportions of pupils reach the higher Level 5 in mathematics, science and reading, although the school has been less successful in writing.

From starting in the Reception class with skills that are below those levels expected for their age, all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, reach average standards by Year 2. The proportions of pupils gaining the higher Level 3 in Year 2 have increased in reading and mathematics, although as in Year 6, writing remains a relative weakness. The good progress made by pupils through the school represents good achievement.

The school lifted overall standards in the 2008 test results as a result of its focused work on aspects of English, mathematics and science. The school exceeds its challenging targets in both English and mathematics.

### **Personal development and well-being**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school because they say, 'The teachers make it easy for us to learn and the school is like a whole big family.' Pupils' outstanding moral and social development is clearly demonstrated in their exemplary behaviour. Pupils really like participating in practical activities such as sport and music.

Take-up of out-of-school activities is very good and pupils enjoy participating in additional activities, including trips to the theatre. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe and have a strong awareness of how to stay healthy. They are very clear about what constitutes a healthy diet. Their attitudes and efforts are recognised in a Healthy School award and the Activemark status for sport.

Pupils make a valuable contribution to the school through the school council. The work of this group enables the school to make meaningful decisions regarding, for example, the selection of trophies and themes for the refurbishment of the school's communal areas, including the

dining room. Pupils also make significant contributions to the wider community through raising funds for national and international charities. Pupils' strong personal qualities and improving skills in literacy and numeracy provide a solid foundation for the future. One parent expressed a typical view in the comment: 'My daughter has come on in leaps and bounds. Her confidence has grown so much that she is a different child.'

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The collaborative approach taken by staff, their very good working relationships and the use of a wide range of teaching methods are key factors in the successful teaching. Teachers and their assistants, working effectively within teams, provide well-focused support for small groups. Pupils usually benefit from a brisk pace in lessons and well-crafted tasks that are matched to their stages of learning. Occasionally, pupils make exceptionally good gains in their learning as a result of meaningful activities that capture their full attention and draw upon their imagination and creativity. However, on occasion, introductions are rather long and more able pupils are not always challenged early enough.

The very effective use of learning targets and success criteria extends pupils' knowledge and skills and involves them in learning. Teachers use marking very effectively to provide pointers for improvement. In lessons, pupils explain their tasks with confidence and outline how they are going to improve. Pupils work very well together in pairs and groups and willingly share their findings. Very effective use is made of information and communication technology, including computerised whiteboards, to engage pupils and include them in a broad range of interesting learning opportunities.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a good balance between basic skills in literacy and numeracy and the effective development of pupils' performance and creative skills in subjects such as physical education, art and music. This approach provides a key foundation to pupils' learning. Pupils have contributed to the choice of themes for the work of a local artist. These murals provide a powerful insight into the emphasis the school places on its development of a creative curriculum. One parent typically commented: 'Yenton is a happy school, where children are encouraged to be creative and rewarded for hard work.'

The focus on literacy and numeracy skills has been particularly successful in raising achievement and lifting standards in mathematics and reading. The school's success in mathematics has been brought about by driving home the importance of numeracy in everyday life. An equally strong focus on using vocabulary has also led to substantial improvement to standards in science. Effective links between subjects successfully reinforce pupils' learning. However, the school knows it still has more to do to boost pupils' writing in all subjects, which it is tackling through the introduction of a number of initiatives to make writing more interesting.

The very good range of out-of-school activities, including a residential trip for pupils in Year 6 and a visit to a farm, is used well to enrich pupils' experiences and extend their learning on topics. Links have also been established with local schools to provide further challenges for pupils and share expertise among staff.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 1

Pastoral care and academic support are outstanding. The school's caring ethos provides a strong foundation for its work and gives rise to very good relationships between pupils and staff, and among the pupils. At the time of the inspection, arrangements to safeguard and protect pupils were firmly established.

Parents are supportive of the school. With the help of staff who liaise between school and families, the school has been resolute in introducing different strategies to raise attendance and improve punctuality. These have proved to be largely successful, although a small, but significant, proportion of pupils are persistently late to school.

Staff know the pupils exceptionally well and academic guidance is outstanding. Assessment is used particularly well to check progress, identify pupils or groups in need of additional support, tackle any signs of underachievement and set clear targets for improvement. Pupils are involved in their own assessments and understand how they can improve their work.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Much has been achieved since the last inspection. The school has already successfully created an ethos where care and support feature strongly. The large majority of parents are pleased with most aspects of the school's work and, as one parent wrote, 'I strongly believe that the school has my children's best interests at heart.' However, the school recognised the need to strengthen the collective leadership by giving key personnel greater responsibility. The effectiveness of the leadership team has also been sharpened with the engagement of a new deputy headteacher. Important outcomes are that pupils are making a more rapid rate of progress than in the past. Standards have improved in English, mathematics and science, although the school recognises it has further to go to lift standards in writing to the levels already reached in other subjects.

Knowledgeable governors are closely involved in the school's work and have a good understanding of its performance. They bring a wide range of expertise to their role of holding the school to account for the standards achieved by pupils. Consequently, the capacity for moving the school forward and bringing about improvement is good.

The school has a good knowledge and understanding of the community it serves and seeks the views of parents. It has extended its work through, for example, the engagement of parent support advisors. The school is actively engaged in promoting links with local schools, and the curriculum is used effectively to increase pupils' understanding of the United Kingdom and global communities. Currently, the school is developing a link with a school in Kenya.

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**Annex A**

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

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<sup>1</sup>Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

13 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Yenton Primary School, Birmingham, B24 0ED

Thank you for making us feel so welcome, talking to us and helping us during the inspection. This letter is to tell you about some of the things we found out about your school. Importantly, yours is a good school where staff and governors are working hard to make it even better. We were pleased to hear that you and a large majority of your parents and carers like the school. You behave extremely well and get on with each other.

Here are some important things about your school.

- You make good progress and reach above average standards in mathematics, reading and science by the end of Year 6.
- Those in charge of the school have already made improvements that are helping you to make faster progress in writing.
- You talk proudly about your achievements and the range of after-school activities.
- You feel safe and secure in school.
- All staff take good care of you and make sure that you know what to do to keep safe.
- You have a good understanding of what makes for a healthy lifestyle and healthy eating.

This is what your school has been asked to do to make things even better.

- Give you more opportunities to write more often in all subjects, especially those of you who write well, so that you can write even better.
- Work with those of you, and your parents and carers, whose attendance and punctuality are not as good as they could be in order to improve them.

You can help to make things better by continuing to try hard in all lessons. We wish each one of you every success in your future education.

Yours faithfully

Paul Canham Lead inspector