

Inspection of a good school: Yorkmead Junior and Infant School

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

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 July 2023

Outcome

Yorkmead Junior and Infant School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy their time at school. They live up to the school values of 'all together, being open minded', and having curiosity, determination, empathy and fairness. They behave well in lessons and around school. They get on well together, including with those pupils from backgrounds different to their own. Pupils feel safe in school. Bullying is rare and dealt with well if it arises. If pupils are worried or anxious about anything, they can go to 'The Nest', speak to a trusted adult or visit Lenny, the dog mentor.

Leaders set high expectations for all pupils to do well, including in reading. Pupils benefit from a state-of-the-art, fully stocked library staffed by a full-time librarian. This helps them appreciate the importance of reading from a very early age. Phonics workshops for parents and carers help them know how to support their children at home. Lessons are enhanced by trips, such as to Kenilworth Castle and Bath Spa, which bring their learning to life and inspire their writing. Pupils are doing especially well in mathematics. Older pupils are proud to show off their musical talents, for example, to their parents in their brass band concert. They are performing again at the Birmingham Symphony Hall.

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

Leaders have devised an ambitious curriculum that gives pupils access to a wide range of subjects. They plan work carefully in a sequenced order to enable pupils to build on what they have previously learned. Constant reinforcement and practice help pupils to remember more. In history, for example, when older pupils were studying castles, they remembered the term 'portcullis' from when they were in the Nursery. Children in Reception are already identifying and classifying dinosaurs, using their analytical skills to examine fossils.

As soon as they join Reception, children start learning the letters and sounds they need know to become fluent readers. Teachers and additional adults make sure phonics is taught consistently well and sequentially. Pupils, including those who are at the early stages of reading or have fallen behind, read books that are well matched to the letters

and sounds they already know. As a result, they quickly gain the knowledge and skills they need, which in turn gives them confidence to become fluent readers. Pupils also get to practise their literacy skills through other subjects. All classes, including Nursery and Reception, have timetabled lessons based in the library, which is utilised very well.

All pupils experience a full range of subjects. Where pupils speak English as an additional language or have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), teachers make suitable adaptations to their teaching to enable these pupils to access the work. The number of pupils included on the SEND register is low. Under new leadership, there is recognition that not all pupils with needs have been properly identified and recorded as such.

Teachers check carefully what pupils have learned and where there may be gaps. In mathematics, for example, this is done effectively through questioning to test out understanding. Teachers identify specific aspects where it would benefit individuals or larger groups to have extra help or more practice.

Leaders have worked successfully to promote pupils' oracy, either through whole-class discussion or partner talk. Most teachers are adept at modelling good spoken English and correcting mistakes, but there are occasions when this is not done as consistently well.

Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to their learning. In early years, children learn good behaviour routines very early on. All pupils spoken to understood the behaviour consequence system, which is only needed on rare occasions. Incidents of low-level disruption in lessons are infrequent. However, in a small number of instances where staff are less experienced, they do occur, leading to a few pupils losing concentration or engaging in off-task chatter.

Leaders provide wide opportunities for pupils beyond the curriculum, such as a recent trip to a local safari park. There are competitions, such as 'a million answers in March' and mathematics events with a local high school. A recent careers fair inspired pupils' ambitions, particularly through talking to former pupils who attended. Pupils gain in their knowledge of the wider world from visits to different places of worship. They recently made Mehndi patterns when celebrating Eid. Pupils have a good understanding of rules in society, including 'the 10 commandments'. Through their actions and conduct, pupils demonstrate several British values, for example, tolerance and respect. However, fundamental British values are not taught explicitly enough to ensure pupils fully understand them.

Leaders do much to promote well-being, with a dedicated senior leadership post for this responsibility. Staff are highly appreciative of the steps taken by leaders to reduce workload. Those with specific leadership responsibilities are given sufficient time for their roles. Governors are highly committed to the school. New governor appointments have enhanced the knowledge and experience of the governing body. Governors support and challenge leaders well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are well trained to ensure that they keep pupils safe. Any pupils potentially at risk are quickly identified. Leaders are tenacious at securing additional external support or early help when it is needed. Appropriate systems are in place to ensure staff are recruited safely and any allegations are investigated properly. Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe online, especially if accessing computer games or social media sites. Leaders protect pupils by enforcing a 'zero-tolerance' approach to offensive language or abuse. Governors ensure that the school meets its statutory safeguarding duties.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There are some inconsistencies in the way less experienced staff manage low-level disruption and correct pupils' spoken English. As a result, some pupils miss key learning and others continue to make the same grammatical or pronunciation mistakes. Leaders should ensure that there is greater consistency in how staff manage low-level disruption and address common spoken errors in English.
- Not all pupils who have SEND needs have been included on the SEND register. This means some pupils miss out on additional specialist support. Leaders should ensure that all pupils' additional needs are accurately identified and met.
- Leaders have not been explicit enough in the teaching of fundamental British values. Although pupils demonstrate some of the British values in their actions and conduct, some pupils are limited in their understanding of them. Leaders should ensure that British values are more clearly promoted to enhance pupils' understanding of them.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2018.

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.

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	103284
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10256974
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	464
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Barbara Marsh
Headteacher	Alex Newman-Smith
Website	www.yorkmead.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new assistant headteacher post for well-being has been created since the last inspection.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other leaders and staff.
- The inspector spoke to several groups of pupils.
- The inspector met three members of the governing body, including the vice chair. He also spoke to the chair by telephone.

- The inspector spoke to the school's external improvement partner by telephone.
- The inspector took account of responses to the Ofsted Parent View free-text service, the online questionnaire and the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey.
- The inspector considered information on pupils' behaviour, attendance, personal development, safeguarding and child protection.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, history and mathematics. He also discussed work in a number of other subjects, including in the early years foundation stage. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also listened to pupils reading.

Inspection team

Mark Sims, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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