

# Yew Tree Primary School

Yew Tree Lane, Dukinfield, Cheshire SK16 5BJ

<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 July 2016
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The ambitious and determined leadership of the headteacher, supported effectively by other senior leaders, has brought about improvement since the previous inspection.
- Curriculum leaders play a key role in school improvement. Their actions have resulted in improvements in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Governance has improved since the previous inspection. Governors use their broad range of skills to challenge leaders effectively and hold them to account for the impact of their actions.
- Pupils say that teachers make learning fun. Teachers plan lessons that enthuse pupils, ensuring that they make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The policies and procedures to keep pupils safe are effective.
- The provision for children in the early years has improved significantly since the previous inspection. As a result, children make good progress and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils display very positive attitudes towards their learning. They participate in lessons with enthusiasm and confidence.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. They listen to their teachers attentively during lessons and are polite and well-mannered ambassadors of the school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The proportion of pupils who are absent from school is above the national average.
- The gap in achievement between disadvantaged children and others, in the early years, increased in 2016.
- Opportunities to challenge the most able pupils, so that their learning is deepened, are sometimes missed, particularly in mathematics.

## Full report

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

- Increase the impact leaders have on reducing pupils' absence from school by:
  - substantially raising the profile of attendance across the school
  - building on the inconsistent improvements seen for those pupils who are absent often
  - ensuring that leaders review the impact of their actions in this area frequently
  - making sure that governors hold leaders to account for their actions to address this issue.
  
- Ensure that the most able pupils are given every opportunity to deepen their learning, particularly in mathematics by:
  - making sure that teachers plan learning activities that provide an appropriate level of challenge for the most able pupils.
  
- Make sure that the gap in achievement between disadvantaged children and their peers in the early years closes rapidly

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The ambitious and determined leadership of the headteacher, supported effectively by other senior leaders, has brought about improvement since the previous inspection. A sustained focus on driving up the standards of the quality of teaching has reaped rewards. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is now good.
- Senior leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well. This is because they are a regular presence in classrooms. They use frequent checks on the quality of teaching and of pupils' books to tailor support and training for teachers. Those teachers who spoke to inspectors say that they value this training greatly.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors have a clear and aspirational vision for the school. Leaders recognise that they have achieved significant improvements but are also clear about what still needs to be done. Everyone is working towards these goals. Contributions are valued and staff morale is high. As one curriculum leader stated: 'Senior leaders believe in us.'
- Middle leaders are playing their part in school improvement. They form an ambitious and cohesive team who have gelled together in a relatively short period of time. Their actions have resulted in improvements in the quality of teaching and learning and consequently pupils' achievement. In mathematics, for instance, the introduction of a new approach to teaching reasoning and problem-solving skills has resulted in rapid improvements in the progress that pupils make and the standards that they achieve.
- Leaders at all levels have demonstrated good capacity to deliver further improvements. Decisive action to change the way that phonics skills are taught, for example, has resulted in a significant increase in the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check this year.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is promoted well through a broad and rich curriculum. Leaders challenge stereotypes and help pupils to understand a wide range of cultures and lives, for instance through displays such as 'different families, same love'. The curriculum is further enriched through visits to the theatre and historic sites such as Quarry Bank Mill.
- Likewise, pupils develop a good understanding of fundamental British values. Respect and tolerance of others runs as a golden thread throughout the school. Assemblies on prejudice-based bullying help ensure that pupils treat each other well. Members of different faiths also visit the school and share their knowledge with pupils. Pupils are elected to become members of the junior leadership team and consequently develop a good understanding of democracy.
- Senior leaders and governors ensure that extra funding is used effectively to support those pupils known to be disadvantaged. As a result, the progress that this group of pupils make is at least in line with other pupils in most classes. For those pupils leaving the school, the overall gap in achievement to other pupils nationally narrowed in 2015 for the second successive year.
- A sports coach, who is a qualified physical education teacher employed by a local secondary school, is provided using the primary physical education and sport funding. This allows teachers to observe specialist teaching and enhance their own skills. Pupils say that they value the wide range of after-school clubs on offer, such as dance, multi-sports and football. Dancers from the school recently participated in the Dukinfield Festival.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governance has improved since the previous inspection. Members of the governing body have a wide range of relevant skills that they bring to bear to undertake their role well. They have a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. This is because they receive detailed information from the headteacher and other senior leaders. Furthermore, they utilise their own expertise to visit the school to test out the information about school improvement that they are given.
  - Evidence from minutes of meetings shows that governors ask pertinent questions to hold leaders mostly to account for the impact of their actions. However, questions about improving pupils' attendance have not been robust enough to bring about rapid improvements in this area. They keep a close eye on the finances of the school and have utilised a healthy budget effectively to fund resources that have contributed to improvements in the quality of teaching, particularly in mathematics and phonics.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All pupils who spoke to inspectors stated that they are kept safe in school. Staff are diligent during lunch and breaktimes to ensure that pupils are well cared for. All checks to ensure that adults are suitable to work with children have been undertaken and are

recorded in the single central register. All staff have been trained so that they know what to do if they have safeguarding concerns about a child. Assemblies led by a range of organisations further ensure that pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The inconsistent quality of teaching and learning across the school, reported at the previous inspection, has been eradicated. In discussions with inspectors, many pupils told us that the best thing about their school is their teachers: 'because they make learning fun'.
- In most lessons, teachers plan work that builds upon and extends pupils' learning and understanding. Pupils in Year 6, for instance, produced writing of a high standard during one lesson as they wrote in the voice of a counsellor, advising a character from the book 'There's a boy in the girls' bathroom'. However, in some classes, there are missed opportunities to deepen pupils' understanding, particularly in mathematics, for the most able pupils.
- In the strongest lessons, pupils make rapid progress because teachers have high expectations and make clear what pupils need to do to succeed. In a Year 3 lesson, for example, pupils consolidated and extended their understanding of punctuation when their teacher demonstrated the activity clearly at the beginning of the lesson.
- Evidence from pupils' books, lesson observations and discussions with pupils shows that teachers plan activities that ignite enthusiasm for learning. Pupils in key stage 2 deepened their understanding of the second world war when they had the opportunity to listen to and write about a veteran tank commander who had helped to free a Dutch town.
- Pupils are given frequent opportunities to develop and apply their reading and writing skills across a wide range of subjects and genres. Those pupils who read to inspectors, for instance, read a broad range of books and were able to articulate their love of reading. However, there are fewer opportunities for pupils to develop and apply mathematical skills across the wider curriculum.
- In most lessons, teachers use questioning effectively to encourage pupils to think more deeply about their learning and develop the skills of persistence. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson, for example, pupils who were grappling with a problem about percentages were encouraged to persevere and think about how to tackle the problem logically through skilful questioning by their teacher.
- In almost all classes, teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils' learning. They reflect the good level of questioning seen from class teachers, encouraging pupils to be resilient and persevere when faced with difficulties. Most teaching assistants know what is expected of them and have good subject knowledge.
- Teachers and teaching assistants keep a close eye on how well pupils grasp new ideas during lessons. They use this information to support and challenge pupils further. In some lessons observed, teachers used this information well to pause and reshape their lessons, correcting misconceptions so that pupils' learning did not falter.
- The teaching of spelling and phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) has improved this year. This is because senior leaders have taken action to change how these aspects are taught. Consequently, pupils are now using their spelling and phonics skills more accurately in their writing across all subjects.
- Learning in all classes is underpinned by strong relationships between adults and pupils. There is a mutual respect and adults act as good role models, setting high expectations of behaviour that contributes to the progress that pupils make.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils display very positive attitudes towards their learning. They participate in lessons with enthusiasm and confidence. They are proud of their achievements and share their success with visitors keenly. Pupils in key stage 2, for instance, chatted to inspectors with obvious pride about the trophies they and their classmates had received for learning mathematical facts.
- Pupils relish challenge and display good levels of resilience and perseverance when faced with difficult or

complex tasks. This is because their teachers and teaching assistants have created an ethos that builds confidence and self-esteem in each classroom.

- Members of the junior leadership team are proud of the role that they play in helping to develop the school. They enthusiastically told inspectors about making a video about the school that helped them to win a bursary of £500.
- Pupils' respect and tolerance of others is a strength of the school. During lessons, pupils collaborate exceptionally well, discussing their learning with one another and sharing ideas to solve problems or improve their writing. Pupils say that they welcome everyone to their school, no matter what their differences.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying. They are taught about prejudiced types of behaviour and say that this is not an issue at their school. Pupils know how to keep safe. Visits to the school by organisations such as the NSPCC and the police, to deliver assemblies, further enhance pupils' understanding of how to keep safe.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils listen to their teachers attentively during lessons and respond to instructions quickly and without fuss. Their positive attitudes towards their learning contribute strongly to the progress that they make.
- Pupils are polite and well-mannered around all areas of the school. During lunchtimes and breaktimes, pupils play well alongside and with each other, ensuring that nobody is left out of games or activities. Adults ensure that pupils are well supervised and join in with activities, acting as strong role models.
- Older pupils act as good role models for the youngest children in the school. Children in the Reception Year, for example, are helped to prepare for their move into Year 1 when they join in with activities on the key stage 1 playground in the summer term.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. However, overall attendance is below the national average. Leaders' work to address this issue has had variable results. Nonetheless, almost three quarters of pupils who were persistently absent in 2015 have improved their attendance in 2016. Leaders have identified that further work needs to be undertaken to build upon these inconsistent improvements.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

**are good**

- Historically, pupils have not made enough progress in mathematics to ensure that the proportion of pupils reaching the standards expected for their age were at least in line with the national average by the time pupils left the school. However, improvements in the quality of teaching and changes to how mathematics is taught have resulted in improvements in pupils' achievement for the past two years. Pupils' books and school tracking information show that current pupils, in almost all classes, now make good progress. The proportion of pupils leaving the school this year who reached the standards expected for their age is at least in line with that seen nationally.
- Following a sharp decline in the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check in 2015, leaders took decisive action to address the issue. As a result, pupils now make good progress in developing and applying their phonics skills to their reading and writing. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the screening check in 2016 has improved significantly.
- In 2015, the proportion of pupils who made expected and above expected progress in reading was above the national average. Current pupils continue to make good progress in reading. Those pupils who read to inspectors did so fluently, using clues from punctuation to add intonation to their voice. Most pupils were able to use their phonics skills to tackle unfamiliar words. Nonetheless, in a small number of reading lessons observed, learning faltered for some pupils, as independent activities did not effectively promote reading skills.
- Writing books show that, from their starting points, pupils make good progress. By the time they leave Year 6, pupils are able to use sophisticated sentence construction, a varied vocabulary and effective punctuation and grammar. Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to write and apply their skills across different subjects.
- School assessment information shows that disadvantaged pupils make progress in reading, writing and mathematics that is in line and sometimes above other pupils in the school. The gap in achievement to other pupils nationally by the time pupils leave the school narrowed for the second successive year in 2015.
- Those pupils known to have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. This is

because they are well supported in class by teachers and well-trained teaching assistants. Their progress is precisely monitored so that it is not allowed to falter.

- For the past three years, the most able pupils have made progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave the school which is in line with other pupils nationally. Current pupils' books show that this group of pupils continue to make the progress expected of them. However, progress is not more rapid than this, as in some classes teachers miss opportunities, particularly in mathematics, to give pupils work that provides a deeper level of challenge.

## Early years provision

is good

- Strong leadership has resulted in significant improvements in the early years provision since the previous inspection. When children enter the Nursery they now get off to a good start to their education. From starting points that are often below those typical for their age, most children make good progress so that they are well prepared for key stage 1.
- Teachers plan activities that are purposeful and enthuse children to learn. In the Nursery, for instance, children were enthralled in their learning as they consolidated their understanding of letter sounds by firing a jet of water at different letters in the outside learning area.
- Adults plan lessons and activities that build on what children already know. All groups of pupils are very well challenged, including the most able. Adults use questioning to good effect to help encourage children to think more deeply about problems. Children's mathematical understanding was developed well, for example during a game of skittles when the teaching assistant took the opportunity to challenge children to add together the digits displayed on each skittle.
- Teaching assistants have a positive impact on learning. This is because they mirror the skills of the class teachers. Teaching assistants are well prepared as teachers' planning makes clear what is to be taught and how to check if children are learning well.
- Imaginative activities that are led by adults enthuse children to learn. In a mathematics lesson, children were captivated as they developed their number skills when their teacher challenged them to calculate which numbered pot a 'ladybird' was hiding under.
- Well-established routines and high expectations ensure that behaviour across the early years is good. The building blocks for the strong levels of collaboration, seen by older pupils across the school, are firmly laid in the Reception class. A group of boys, for instance, worked well together taking turns and sharing resources to build a range of vehicles for 'people who help us'.
- Children are well supervised by diligent staff to ensure that all children are kept safe.
- The early years provision is led well. Identified weaknesses have been robustly addressed so that the quality of teaching and learning across the Nursery and Reception classes is now consistently good. As a result, outcomes for children have improved for the past two years. Nonetheless, this year the gap between disadvantaged children and other children at the end of Reception has widened.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106223
<b>Local authority</b>	Tameside
<b>Inspection number</b>	10012109

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	529
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Vickie Johnson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paula Tankard
<b>Telephone number</b>	01613383452
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.yewtree.tameside.sch.uk">www.yewtree.tameside.sch.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:admin@yewtree.tameside.sch.uk">admin@yewtree.tameside.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11–12 March 2014

## Information about this school

- Yew Tree is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is above that found nationally. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children that are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils reported to have English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average.
- At the time of the inspection, the school website complied with statutory requirements.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons in each class of the school.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, members of staff, representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a wide range of documentation, including information relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance, school improvement planning and assessment information.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally during the school day and observed them during playtime, at lunch and before and after school. They also met formally with two groups of pupils to discuss their learning, behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors heard a number of children read.
- Inspectors took note of displays around the school.
- A range of pupils' books was checked.
- Inspectors took account of the 14 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). The inspectors also took note of the results of the school's own recent parental questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Martin Bell, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
John Daly	Ofsted Inspector
Linda Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector

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