

Inspection of Yewtree Primary School

Fletcher Way, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP2 5QR

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 March 2022

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 at Yewtree are encouraged to be independent and to respect others, treating all equally. Staff model these values and provide a calm and warm atmosphere for pupils to learn in. As a result, pupils are respectful to adults and to each other. Pupils told inspectors that they are treated fairly and that they understand the consequences of not following expectations. The 'star in a jar' rewards that pupils earn by working hard, being kind or doing well are very popular.

Parents say that their children have good friends. They are confident that they get along well with other children in school. Pupils say that they value their friendships with each other and that adults deal with any issues that arise, including bullying.

Pupils feel safe. They know that there are trusted adults they can go to if they need to. Pupils say that adults 'boost their confidence' and listen to what they have to say. Older pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities, such as being lunch helpers. They are also proud supporting other pupils to decide and choose what to do at playtimes.

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

School leaders have prioritised the development of the curriculum. They have established clear guidance for teachers in most subjects. This support ensures that teachers know what to teach in every area of the curriculum, including in the early years. These plans lay out the milestones that pupils are expected to achieve during the year. The plans also show the key vocabulary that pupils should know at each stage of their learning. In some subjects, there is additional guidance. These guidelines help teachers to plan the best approaches in smaller units of work to help pupils build upon their prior learning. In some subjects, leaders have not made this as clear for staff. Where this is the case, pupils are not as successful in making connections in what they are learning.

Pupils enjoy learning. They listen well to their teachers. The new behaviour policy has had a positive impact on pupils' learning. Everyone understands what good learning attitudes look like. Pupils are keen to take part in their learning. They enjoy the familiar routines in lessons. These include reading with their partners and using appropriate resources.

Pupils who are in the early stages of learning to read are very well supported. The training that staff receive helps them to identify gaps in pupils' reading knowledge. As a result of effective support, those pupils who fall behind catch up quickly. Staff are clear about what pupils need to know at every stage of their reading development.

Staff in the early years have high expectations of pupils' reading. They establish reading routines quickly. Children respond well to these expectations by listening and trying their best. Consequently, more pupils are ready to access their learning in Year 1.

Pupils learn and achieve well in those subjects where leaders have set out clear guidance about what pupils need to know and when. This guidance helps teachers to understand what pupils need to do next. It also helps them know when pupils have met curriculum expectations. In a few subjects, it is less clear to teachers what pupils should know at each stage. As a result, teacher assessment in these subjects is not as accurate as it could be.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. Staff know pupils and accurately identify their individual needs well. Staff work well with other professionals to ensure that pupils receive the best available support. Pupils with SEND take part in all curriculum lessons alongside their peers. Parents appreciate the support their children receive in lessons. They also appreciate the extra time that they, as parents, receive to discuss their child's needs.

Staff support pupils' personal development well. Pupils understand the school rules and the importance of accepting others' differences. They learn about a range of religions and cultures, which prepares them for life in modern Britain. Parents appreciate some of the visits and trips that pupils undertake which help widen their children's ambitions and interests.

Leaders, staff, governors and the local authority work closely together to improve the quality of education and what the school has to offer its pupils and families. This partnership working is a strength. It has contributed effectively to bringing about rapid improvement in the school.

Teachers say that leaders are considerate of staff's workload. Staff also appreciate the consideration that leaders give to their well-being. Staff enjoy working at Yewtree.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that the single central record of employee checks is maintained and that all pre-employment checks are completed. Leaders have clear systems of communication and identification to ensure that pupils and families who need help are supported.

Staff receive regular training, including in-year safeguarding updates which support them further in identifying concerns. Staff are clear on procedures for recording their concerns, including any that they may have about other staff. Pupils are also supported to keep themselves safe. For example, they are taught about gang culture and its dangers and how to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In most areas of the curriculum, leaders have ensured that the content taught builds on pupils' prior learning over time. However, in a few subjects, leaders have not made sure that all teachers are familiar with important knowledge that they want pupils to know. This means that pupils are not always able to link new learning with what they have learned before. Leaders must ensure that they support teachers to plan, teach and assess the important knowledge in all areas of the curriculum equally as well so that pupils build on their learning securely over time and, consequently, achieve consistently well.
- The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently well planned and sequenced in some subjects. It is clear from leaders' actions that they are in the process of bringing this about. Leaders need to complete the process of reviewing the curriculum in all subjects within their identified timescale. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied.

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	135222
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10207080
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	326
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dawn Helfgott
Headteacher	Karen Yilmaz
Website	www.yewtree.herts.sch.uk/
Dates of previous inspection	16 and 17 May 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Yewtree Primary School is an average-sized primary school.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, history and design and technology. For each deep dive, inspectors spoke to curriculum leaders, visited lessons, spoke with pupils, looked at pupils' workbooks and spoke to teachers whom they had seen teach.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors, and also held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.

- Inspectors looked at the school’s arrangements for safeguarding, including the single central record of recruitment checks.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders about the systems and processes to support safeguarding, and the safeguarding ethos in the school.
- Inspectors spoke with senior leaders, including those leaders who oversee provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors considered the 14 responses to Ofsted’s online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the 14 free-text comments. Inspectors considered the 32 responses to Ofsted’s staff survey and 50 responses to Ofsted’s pupil survey.

Inspection team

Debbie Rogan, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sara Boyce	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Ingram	Ofsted Inspector

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