

Yavneh Primary School

Hillside Avenue, Borehamwood, Hertfordshire WD6 1HL

Inspection dates

26–27 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Pupils at Yavneh Primary School make exceptionally strong progress. The quality of teaching is excellent in all subjects. Consequently, pupils achieve very well.
- The 'Yavneh way' is woven through all aspects of school life. This sets the expectation that pupils will behave exceptionally well, be resilient and work hard. Pupils are very clear about what is expected of them and strive to achieve this.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Topics both build on pupils' interests and expand their understanding of the world around them. Pupils are encouraged to use their English skills in other subjects, such as history and geography.
- Phonics teaching is very effective. Building on this, pupils' writing is developed very well. Opportunities for writing are seized upon throughout the curriculum. Pupils also take part in regular discussion, role play, drama and open-ended activities. Teachers make learning enjoyable.
- The teaching of science and music is a key strength. Pupils develop strong practical skills, together with accurate understanding of specific subject vocabulary and ideas.
- Leaders are highly regarded by staff, parents and carers. Leaders have ensured that all involved in the school share the same high expectations. Teachers receive quality coaching and development to help them perform to the highest standard.
- Governors know the school well and challenge leaders to further improve the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are expertly supported within their classrooms, with tasks adapted to support their needs. As a result, this group of pupils make very good progress.
- Parents are highly supportive of the school. Virtually all say that their children are making exceptional progress and are very happy. Teachers keep parents well informed about their children's life in school through regular 'focus child' meetings.
- Pupils' work is of high quality. However, there are occasions when their presentation and handwriting is not as excellent as it could be. This is due to differing expectations from some members of staff about this aspect of learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teachers have equally high expectations for pupils' presentation of work and quality of handwriting.
- Ensure that as the school grows, the same quality of leadership and teaching and the same high standards of behaviour are expanded into key stage 2.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- Leaders have created a school that has the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve. The headteacher is clear on what she wants teaching and learning to look like: it is often fun; it is engaging; it produces strong progress; and it results in excellent outcomes.
- Leaders have extended the 'Yavneh way' from the linked secondary school – part of the multi-academy trust (MAT) – to provide an ethos of resilience, hard work and good behaviour which is shared by all pupils and reinforced by staff throughout each day.
- Teachers' performance is enhanced by leaders through high-quality monitoring and professional development. Teachers benefit from the close links between the secondary and primary schools, sharing training opportunities that would not otherwise be possible for a smaller school. All staff who responded to the staff survey strongly agreed with the statement that 'leaders do all they can to ensure the school has a motivated, respected and effective teaching staff'.
- Leaders are keenly aware of each individual pupil's attainment, progress and needs. They work closely with teachers to make sure that every pupil receives the support and challenge needed. There are very few pupils eligible for the pupil premium; however, in the few cases, additional funding is used well to enhance provision.
- As the school grows, senior leaders are working closely with those who will be the middle leaders. As a result, these members of staff feel well prepared for their subject leader roles. Those subject leaders already in place have a strong understanding of their subjects and work effectively with teachers to ensure that the curriculum is of an excellent standard.
- The physical education (PE) and sport premium funding is used well. The playground is not large, but the space has been well thought out and pupils have access to a wide variety of equipment to encourage active play at lunchtime. All pupils take part in a 'daily k' on a track laid out around this area which helps to encourage them to be active and healthy.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is knowledgeable about pupils with SEND. These pupils are ably supported within their classes, with staff subtly adapting activities or providing additional resources, such as the school's chosen strategy of sound buttons to support their work. Parents are well informed about their children's needs and the SENCo meets with them regularly.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and goes above and beyond that of the national curriculum in terms of subjects taught and the depth that is covered. Subjects are carefully linked where this makes sense and taught discretely where appropriate.
- The school is exceptionally well regarded by parents, 99% of whom would recommend the school. The following is typical of parents' comments: 'My son is absolutely thriving at Yavneh Primary School. The teaching is full of energy and creativity. He has progressed extremely well, and he enjoys school very much too.'
- Leaders ensure that pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is a

priority. The clear ethos of the school supports this well. There are many opportunities, both extra-curricular and in learning, for pupils to develop strong moral duty and awareness of key British values.

Governance of the school

- Governors have been involved in the school since well before it opened. They are highly supportive but also extremely ambitious for what it can achieve.
- Governors keep themselves informed about the work of the school by making regular, focused visits. These then give rise to questions that inform the governing body's challenge to school leaders. Governors are tenacious in following through on these to check for school effectiveness.
- Governors have a clear idea of how additional funding is used. They challenge school leaders to ensure that this funding is tightly focused on raising attainment and they check for impact.
- The MAT consists of just two schools, on the same site. The MAT leaders work together to improve the education for all pupils, from 4 to 18, by sharing resources and staff skills. These links are intended to develop even further as the primary school grows into key stage 2. Already, this supports the development of the school, with shared expertise in safeguarding and finance.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff have high-quality training and are provided with safeguarding updates throughout the year. Some of this is shared with the secondary school to make best use of staff skills and expertise. The headteacher checks on adults' understanding, using informal quizzes in their weekly meetings.
- Any concerns about pupils are dealt with by leaders quickly and effectively.
- Pupils feel extremely safe in school and know who they can talk to if they have a worry or concern. All parents agree that their children are safe in school.
- All appropriate checks are made on adults who work at or are regularly in the school.
- The school site is very secure.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teaching is of a very impressive standard. There is a high level of consistency in approaches used, and close adherence to leaders' chosen programmes for phonics, English and mathematics.
- Teachers and support staff make excellent use of questioning to probe pupils' understanding and to support or challenge as necessary.
- Daily 'core skills' sessions provide time for pupils to have group time with teachers and teaching assistants to practise key skills in English and mathematics. Pupils also use the time to carry out independent writing. For example, Year 1 pupils wrote entire,

well-structured stories in this session.

- The teaching of reading is underpinned by extremely strong phonics teaching. Reading is then developed by high-quality group sessions and English lessons that are based around key texts. As a consequence, pupils can read well. They enjoy the texts read and talk about them with enthusiasm.
- Writing plays a big part throughout the curriculum. The school's approach to developing writing in different genres is well thought out and pupils make excellent progress. Specific subjects, such as history and geography, are taught both through the English topics and in discrete lessons. There is a high priority placed upon on developing subject vocabulary.
- Mathematics lessons focus strongly on pupils' understanding and using correct vocabulary. Pupils develop real fluency in using number, and practical apparatus help support all pupils to access the learning. For example, pupils take part in 'mathematics meetings' every day. These are sessions that focus on the use of songs and activities known to the pupils, enabling them to visit key concepts such as dates, counting and sequencing.
- Pupils learn Hebrew as a modern foreign language and teachers make strong use of the approach to English phonics teaching to teach the Hebrew sounds. Pupils enjoy singing songs in Hebrew and by the end of Year 2, they are confident using the Hebrew script to write key words.
- Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is taught through the Jewish studies curriculum. Within this chosen approach, there is an emphasis on being resilient and not giving up. This curriculum also enhances pupils' English skills, providing additional opportunities for writing with a purpose and responding to moral dilemmas.
- Science teaching is of a very high standard. Pupils take part in practical investigation work and explain their ideas well, both in discussion and in written work. Most pupils are working at a standard well above that expected for their age.
- Music is also taught particularly well. Singing is embedded in the daily life of the school, with pupils singing in many lessons and activities. High expectations are evident in discrete music teaching and pupils develop a strong knowledge of notation. The music curriculum is enhanced by visitors, for example a group of African drummers.
- In some classes and some lessons, pupils' presentation of work and handwriting is not of an exceptional, tidy standard and so does not necessarily reflect the quality of what has been written.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are expected to follow the 'Yavneh way', to be courteous, polite, kind and respectful, and they do so admirably.
- Pupils' moral and spiritual development is central to the school's ethos. They talk about what is wrong and what is right on a daily basis. They are taught about respect of

others and demonstrate this throughout their school lives.

- Staff know the pupils in their care very well. Parents have daily opportunities to talk to teachers if they need to and have regular 'focus child' meetings with them. Parents are extremely supportive of the school. A majority responded to the online survey and nearly all would recommend the school.
- There have been no reported incidents of bullying in the time the school has been open, and pupils are clear that there is no bullying. The school holds a 'friendship week' annually to further promote the kind behaviour that pupils show to each other.
- Pupils have an age appropriate understanding about how to keep themselves safe when using the internet.
- Pupils see older pupils from the secondary school on a regular basis and the secondary pupils are seen as clear role models by the primary pupils. Secondary pupils support sports events and work with the younger ones on their Hebrew reading and writing.
- Leaders have established a link with a Catholic primary school, and the two schools have worked together on what makes them the same and what is different. Pupils have learned about each other's faiths and taken part in shared sports events. Pupils are highly positive about the friendships that they have made as part of this.
- Pupils are encouraged to take leadership roles in the school, regardless of their age. The school council is run almost entirely by the elected pupil representatives. School leaders give the school council the responsibility to take decisions, such as choosing the play equipment within a specific budget.
- The curriculum is enhanced by learning about other cultures' celebrations, for example Diwali and Chinese New Year. Teachers make use of the diverse experiences of the pupils, learning about Sinhala from families with Sri Lankan connections.
- Pupils are encouraged to be healthy through keeping fit. All pupils take part in a 'daily k', running around a track on the playground. Equipment at lunchtimes encourages active play.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- When sitting on the carpet during teaching, pupils listen with absolute attention to what they are being taught. Sometimes, their enthusiasm to take part in learning where there is discussion and debate means that they are noisier, but they are instantly brought back to attention by the consistent and quiet signals from teachers.
- Pupils' behaviour as they move around the school site is impeccable. They are confident as they move between the secondary hall, where they have their lunch, and the primary building. They play kindly, sharing the equipment well with each other.
- Pupils are very supportive of one another. They look after friends who are upset or hurt. They work very well together, for example lifting construction equipment that is too heavy for one person.
- Attendance is above the national average. No groups of pupils are disadvantaged by low attendance. Leaders work closely with families to promote good attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- In every subject, pupils make excellent progress. Those who are disadvantaged make the same progress as others; pupils with SEND make substantial progress from their starting points. This is as a result of the outstanding teaching provided throughout the school.
- Children make strong progress in the early years from their starting points. Nearly all pupils at the end of Reception achieve a good level of development and many are at the exceeding level in literacy and mathematics.
- Children use numbers confidently and choose to write and solve large calculations in their play. They often choose to write independently, and this writing is of a very high standard. They write sentences that are increasingly complex and use basic punctuation correctly.
- This year, all pupils in Year 1 have met the required standard in the phonics screening check. Pupils enjoy reading and use their skills well to read longer books when they are able. They read with expression and talk with interest about their books.
- Attainment at the end of key stage 1 is above the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. A large proportion of pupils are at the greater depth standard. They make strong progress in their time in key stage 1. Pupils write with exceptional detail, accuracy and at length for their age.
- The few pupils who are not at the expected standard for their age make strong progress due to the skilled support they receive.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The early years provision provides the same high-quality educational experience as the rest of the school. The impact of leaders' high aspirations is evident.
- When children enter school in the mornings, they take part in 'core skills' activities. These are carefully chosen by teachers to reinforce previous learning, provide independent practice or group work with adults.
- Children receive excellent tuition in direct teaching sessions. These are followed up by times where children can choose from activities which provide many opportunities for them to independently practise skills. Adults skilfully encourage writing, for example asking a child who had made an 'apple tart' out of sand and toys to write a recipe for it.
- During Reception, children develop excellent resilience and independence. They work together on challenges; for example, boys were observed making a minibeast house. Despite the roof continually falling in, they tried different approaches over and again.
- Leaders have identified that although summer-born boys made excellent progress from their starting points, their attainment is below that of the rest of the cohort. Leaders have already begun planning for September to enable this group to attain the same high standards as their peers.
- Teachers have adapted resources to provide additional support for those who need to develop their fine and gross motor skills. There is a range of furniture to provide

different heights for writing and they prioritise physical activity. All Reception children take part in daily fitness sessions where they use apparatus and PE equipment to develop their gross motor skills to a high standard.

- Strong relationships are established with parents and the clear majority are extremely positive about the start that their children have made in school. Children with additional needs start visiting the school regularly well before September. They are further helped by the fact that teachers have provided additional coaching and support before the children formally start. As a consequence, all children get off to a flying start.
- Children's welfare is well provided for. Daily checks are made on the provision and children are taught how to keep themselves safe and healthy when taking part in activities.

School details

Unique reference number	142862
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10088633

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	181
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trustees	Sue Nyman
Chair of governors	Roz Levin
Headteacher	Caroline Field
Executive Headteacher	Spencer Lewis
Telephone number	020 8736 5580
Website	www.yavnehprimary.org
Email address	admin@yavnehprimary.org

Information about this school

- The school opened in September 2016. At the time of the inspection, the school had pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, aged four to seven. It will expand by an additional year group each year until it becomes full, eventually catering for pupils from Reception to Year 6.
- The school is part of the Yavneh College Multi-Academy Trust and shares a site with the Yavneh College.
- There is a local governing body, some members of whom are also MAT trustees. The governing body reports to the trustees.
- The school is of a religious character, that of the Orthodox Jewish faith. A section 48 inspection had taken place the same week as this inspection.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching and learning in every class. Most of these observations were undertaken alongside members of the senior leadership team.
- A wide range of pupils' workbooks were looked at by the inspection team.
- The inspection team met with representatives from the governing body and the MAT. Inspectors also met with senior leaders, middle leaders and other teachers and also considered the 18 responses to the staff survey.
- A group of pupils met with an inspector. Inspectors also spoke with pupils informally in lessons and at playtimes.
- The inspection team scrutinised the school's website and a range of documents, including assessment information and the school's self-evaluation.
- Pupils read to inspectors and talked about their reading preferences.
- The 156 responses made by parents to Parent View were considered. The inspection team also spoke with some parents before school.

Inspection team

Tessa Holledge, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Keith Pullen

Ofsted Inspector

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