

Inspection of Yeo Valley Primary School

Derby Road, Barnstaple, Devon EX32 7HB

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 May 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to come to this welcoming and inclusive school. The warm and caring environment provides a safe space for the pupils to flourish. Leaders ensure that they have high expectations of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils mostly live up to these expectations, developing positive attitudes to learning, engaging well in tasks and focusing on their work with resilience and determination. Despite the work of leaders and other staff, however, too many pupils are still persistently absent.

Relationships between adults and pupils are central to the school ethos. Leaders have developed a culture where all can thrive in the calm and purposeful school environment. Pupils respect staff and each other. As a result, pupils behave well in lessons and the playground. Pupils say there is very little bullying. When it does happen, they say that adults are usually quick to resolve any issues.

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum for arts subjects is well thought through and sequenced. As pupils progress upwards through the school, they learn to play instruments and compose music. Pupils showcase their talents through performances in Exeter and London.

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

Yeo Valley Primary School has been on a rapid journey of improvement since the last inspection. The commitment and decision-making from leaders at all levels have resulted in significant, positive change, including in the quality of education on offer. As a result, leaders have successfully addressed the weaknesses of the predecessor school.

The early years curriculum is exceptional. Children in the early years get off to a flying start. They are supported well through a wide range of precise learning activities, enabling them to achieve highly. Children in Reception are guided to become increasingly independent and resilient. Communication and language are prioritised in the curriculum. Leaders have identified that many children start school with low levels of literacy and speech and language challenges. The work that adults do in early years is invaluable. Their skill and determination to accelerate children's speaking and listening is first class.

In the main school, leaders have constructed a curriculum that is highly ambitious. Subject leaders know their subjects well. In all subjects, learning has been broken down into small, well-sequenced steps. However, in a minority of subjects, the curriculum is not yet fully embedded. This means that some pupils do not develop a deep understanding of what they need to be ready for the next stage in their education. As a result, pupil outcomes at the end of Year 6 are not yet where leaders want them to be.

The provision for pupils with SEND is a strength of the school. Leaders identify the needs of pupils with SEND quickly and accurately. Leaders and staff use technology imaginatively to support the learning of pupils with SEND. Pupils are very adept at using this technology.

Leaders give high priority to the teaching of early reading, including phonics. They make sure that books match the sounds that pupils have learned. Leaders ensure that adults are experts in delivering the phonics programme. Leaders make accurate checks to ensure that pupils understand new learning before they move on. Any errors are quickly identified and corrected. Pupils who need additional support with reading receive effective help. They catch up quickly. Consequently, pupils become accurate and confident readers.

As pupils move into key stage 2, they read a wide range of books from the well-stocked library. Positions of responsibility, like junior librarians, also support and promote a love of reading across the school.

Leaders arrange many trips and residential, which enhances the curriculum for pupils. These bring the curriculum to life. For example, in history, pupils enthusiastically learn about William the Conqueror when they visit the Tower of London. While leaders ensure that there is a range of clubs on offer for pupils to develop their talents and interests, some are not as well attended as leaders would like. Pupils learn how to be healthy, both physically and mentally. The school mentoring programme, with particular focus on pupils with SEND, ensures that every pupil has the chance to discuss their academic and pastoral targets with a trusted adult.

Trustees provide challenge and support to help leaders continue to drive improvement. Leaders are committed to staff development and well-being. Professional development is prioritised. Staff benefit from the collaborative opportunities they are given to develop their expertise. As a result, staff morale is high.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff know pupils well. They have a clear understanding of pupils' backgrounds and the additional challenges that some families face. Leaders have ensured that all adults have regular training to understand the potential areas of harm. Staff raise any concerns about pupils' safety with leaders promptly. Leaders follow these up swiftly and with rigour. Leaders work well with external agencies, when necessary, to ensure that children and families are well supported.

Pupils are taught how to keep safe online through the carefully sequenced curriculum.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Currently, the curriculum is not fully embedded in all subjects. As a result, pupils do not develop a deep understanding of the knowledge they need to be successful in some subjects. Leaders need to ensure that the curriculum is securely and consistently embedded across the school so that pupils develop a deeper understanding over time.

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	146531
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10267805
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Samantha Chapman
Headteacher	Jonathan Bishop
Website	www.yvps.education
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Yeo Valley Primary School converted to become an academy in January 2019. When its predecessor school, Yeo Valley Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted in March 2018, it was judged to be inadequate.
- Yeo Valley Primary School is part of the Cornerstone Academy Trust.
- The headteacher is also the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 held discussions with the headteacher, the head of school and members of the leadership team.
- Inspectors held discussions with the chair of the trust board and three trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, music and history. In each subject, inspectors met with senior and curriculum leaders, talked to pupils, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and looked at pupils' books.
- An inspector listened to pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to an adult.
- An inspector met with the special educational needs coordinator to consider the quality of education for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors reviewed behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors met with staff to consider their views.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records, including the single central record of recruitment checks on staff.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire, Parent View. They also considered the responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Gavin Summerfield, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Matthew Shirley	Ofsted Inspector

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