

# Meole Brace Church of England Primary and Nursery

Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	135789
<b>Local Authority</b>	Shropshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	360754
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 October 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Clive Lewis

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	314
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Judith Clarkson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jenny Davies
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Church Road Shrewsbury SY3 9HG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01743 351027
<b>Fax number</b>	01743 233418
<b>Email address</b>	thehead@meolebrace-pri.shropshire.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 October 2010
<b>Inspection number</b>	360754

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

T: 0300 1234 234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons, observed 10 teachers and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, including a sample of pupils' books, teachers' planning documents, tracking and assessment data, and analysed questionnaires from 115 parents and carers, 105 pupils and 32 staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Is there variation in the quality of teaching and learning across the school?
- What are the quality and rigour of the school's new tracking and assessment systems?
- What is the impact of the work of subject managers and curriculum coordinators?

## Information about the school

This is a new school which opened in September 2009, an amalgamation of former infant and junior schools. The headteacher of the former infant school took over the leadership of the new school. The school is of average size for its type. It provides for a diverse intake. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those learning English as an additional language are below national averages. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, although there is a higher proportion than average of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. There is a Children's Centre on the school site. In its first year, the school has achieved National Healthy School Status.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Meole Brace Church of England Primary and Nursery is a good school. It has a number of outstanding features. In a very short time, under the strong leadership of the headteacher, staff from the former infant and junior schools have joined together to make an effective, lively team with a clear sense of purpose and direction, clearly linked to school improvement. Robust teamwork between the headteacher, senior staff and the local authority has ensured that teaching and learning have improved and are good, whole school assessment and tracking systems have been put in place and clear priorities have been set for further improvement. Although subject leaders and curriculum coordinators have a good understanding of standards and progress in their subject areas and have made an important contribution to leadership in the school's first year, they are still at an early stage of developing a clear overview of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and all other classroom practice in their subjects.

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are very supportive of the school. One parent commented: 'The school provides a happy and safe environment for my child to receive the best education.' Another wrote: 'This is a very special school. We are very happy to be part of it.' Staff want the best for each child and, through working closely with families, strive to achieve this goal. Throughout the school, all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress. The quality of teaching in most lessons is good or better. As a result of good assessment procedures, teachers and other adults plan well to meet the needs of all pupils. Excellent care, guidance and support ensure that all pupils are able to learn and develop confidence, regardless of their individual circumstances. They have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe and of the need for healthy lifestyles. Parents and carers say their children enjoy coming to school. Pupils agree enthusiastically. This is clearly reflected in the above-average levels of attendance. Behaviour is good across the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The curriculum ensures that pupils receive a good variety of exciting activities and experiences through visits, residential stays and visitors to school. The school has excellent partnerships with a wide range of external agencies which support learning very well. It has strong links with the local community. The school recognises that the initial contacts it has made with a school in a contrasting area in the United Kingdom and links with schools overseas are areas for development in order to enhance pupils' understanding of other cultures and lifestyles. The school accurately evaluates how well it is doing and what needs to be done next. Its track record in the first year is strong, having established positive relationships across the school and good educational provision. This success underpins the school's good capacity to sustain improvement.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

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

- Ensure subject coordinators develop a better overview of how to raise attainment by providing opportunities for them to observe teaching and classroom practice in their subjects.
  - Broaden the impact on community cohesion beyond the school's locality by widening links with other communities nationally and globally.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

From below-average levels of attainment on entry, pupils from all social and ethnic backgrounds make good progress as they move through the school. Unvalidated results from the school's first national tests at Year 6 show that pupils across the range of abilities are consistently achieving well. Standards achieved in Year 6 in the 2010 national tests in English and mathematics were in line with national averages although the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels in mathematics was lower than average.

Lesson observations confirm pupils' good behaviour. This ensures good relationships and a high level of attention and motivation in most lessons. Pupils behave considerately towards each other and respond quickly to any additional guidance from staff about how to conduct themselves. As a result, the quality of pupils' learning and progress across the school is good. In one Year 3 writing lesson, outstanding teaching led to exceptional learning. Here, the teacher used a variety of strategies to interest and motivate pupils extremely well. Very good use was made of pupils' previous work to identify good writing and helpful advice was provided on ways in which it could be improved further. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the effective support provided by class teachers, skilled teaching assistants and outside agencies.

All pupils have an excellent understanding of what constitutes an unsafe situation and are confident that issues they raise will be dealt with promptly and effectively by the school. Pupils clearly enjoy their learning. They are interested in the school's health-promotion activities and have an excellent understanding of the main threats to their health and how they can be avoided. They are proud of their school community and actively take up the many opportunities to practise leadership and to contribute to the local community. They respect each other's needs and interests and are curious about the world around them, embracing new experiences enthusiastically. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development upholds the school's values well.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

Good teaching and learning were observed across the school. There is little variation in its quality, although subject leaders are not yet able to confirm this for themselves. Teachers have strong subject knowledge which enthuses and challenges pupils and contributes to their good progress. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives that are routinely shared with pupils. Good use is made of resources, including new technology, to motivate pupils and enhance their learning. Carefully targeted questioning draws out pupils' ideas and develops their thinking and reasoning skills. Support by teaching assistants is well focused and makes a significant contribution to the quality of learning. A new whole-school assessment and tracking system is now providing the school with secure data on pupils' long-term progress as they move through the school. As the volume of secure data grows, it is giving leaders and teachers an overview of school performance and enabling them to make a detailed and accurate analysis of the progress of groups or individuals. Consequently, leaders are able to amend the curriculum to better meet the needs of all groups of pupils.

The curriculum provides carefully adapted activities to ensure all groups of pupils experience success and staff are beginning to link subjects to make learning more meaningful. Pupils particularly enjoy the wide range of after-school activities and clubs, including physical activities and Forest School activities. Collaboration with other schools further enriches the curriculum and links with extended services, for example, the

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Children's Centre staff, the health visitor, the school nurse, police and the educational welfare officer, support the development of the wider curriculum very well. Excellent, very well targeted support for vulnerable pupils enables them and their families to make the best of the opportunities provided by the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities do well in response to caring and sensitive support. Extremely robust arrangements are in place for ensuring that all pupils are safe.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

In the twelve months since the amalgamation of the two schools, the headteacher has consistently communicated to the staff her high expectations about continuing to improve provision. The result of this is clearly evident in the significant improvements made in the school's first year. With the able support of an enthusiastic, committed and well-motivated staff team, she has identified and has rigorously and successfully tackled areas requiring improvement. It is only the lack of opportunity for middle leaders to play a greater role in their subject areas that limits the impact of leaders' drive for improvement, overall, to no more than good. Planning is robust and followed through. Staff regularly take advantage of the professional opportunities provided to enhance their work.

The governing body is influential in determining the strategic direction of the school and fully and systematically involved in evaluating its work. Members have constructive relationships with staff and show determination in challenging and supporting the school and bringing about improvements. There are very high levels of awareness of issues related to safety which permeate the work of the school. There is a comprehensive awareness of safeguarding issues among governors and staff at all levels, all of whom receive rigorous training. The school is a leader of high-quality practice in relation to its safeguarding policies, procedures and their application. This excellent practice is shared with other schools. The good relationship and effective liaison with parents and carers and excellent links with other partners, including the on-site Children's Centre, contribute significantly to improvements in pupils' achievement and well-being. The school promotes equality of opportunity in all its work and is constantly alert to any variation in achievement. It is proactive in devising initiatives to overcome any weaknesses. The school understands its own context and that of the local community well. It has evaluated its position, and has formulated a strategy to develop pupils' understanding of those living in contexts that are different to their own to extend learners' already good contribution to the school and local communities. The school makes good use of all its resources, and provides good value for money.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

When they join the Nursery, children's skills are below those typically found. Most need considerable help to ensure that they learn how to be independent and work and play together. As children move through the Nursery and Reception classes they make good progress because teaching and learning are good overall. Despite this good progress, standards remain below average, particularly in aspects of communication, language and literacy skills, when children enter Year 1. The school wisely continues some aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum for a number of Year 1 pupils. Systems for assessing and tracking children's progress from their entry to the Nursery through the Early Years Foundation Stage are exceptionally strong and effective. Teachers and support staff carefully observe and record children's achievements on a day-to-day basis and use this information well to plan the next steps in learning. Happy and caring relationships are established and children settle quickly. Children behave well and are enthusiastic in all that they do. They clearly enjoy school and play happily together and individually. Staff work hard and successfully to achieve a strong partnership with parents and carers. Pastoral care and welfare arrangements are good and help the children to be safe, well cared for and aware of how to be healthy. Adults provide a wide range of interesting learning activities, allowing children to work on things that they choose themselves, as well as by taking part in more formal group-work activities with adults. There is a very good focus on helping children with their speaking skills and ensuring that they develop an ability to work with others in a friendly and purposeful way. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified quickly, well supported and integrated effectively into all activities. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader is a very experienced practitioner with a good knowledge of the learning, development and welfare requirements of very young



**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

children. National guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage is used well to support children's learning.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

The response to the questionnaire was well in line with that found nationally in primary schools. Almost all parents and carers declare themselves happy with their child's experience at the school, feel certain that the school keeps their child safe and are pleased that it encourages healthy lifestyles. A very large majority of parents and carers agreed with all the other statements, including that their child enjoys school, the teaching is good and the school makes sure that their child is well prepared for the future. A very small minority felt that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour, is not led and managed well and does not take enough account of their suggestions. The inspection team investigated these matters carefully and did not find evidence to support these minority views.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Meole Brace Church of England Primary and Nursery to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 115 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 314 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	77	67	32	28	4	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	73	63	39	34	3	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	73	63	37	32	4	3	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	61	53	46	40	7	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	71	62	40	35	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	65	57	41	36	8	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	67	58	45	39	3	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	70	61	38	33	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	59	51	46	40	6	5	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	61	53	41	36	7	6	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	60	52	41	36	10	9	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	63	55	39	34	7	6	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	72	63	39	34	4	3	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



15 October 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Meole Brace Church of England Primary and Nursery, Shrewsbury, SY3 9HG**

Thank you for welcoming the inspectors to your school and for talking to us about what you do there. Meole Brace is a good school. Those who lead your school do so well and all the adults take exceptional care of you. It was good to see that you clearly enjoy school and that you have a very good understanding of how to keep safe and how important it is to eat healthily and take regular exercise. It is to your credit that you behave well, and get on well with each other and with all the staff. This ensures you all make good progress. Teachers work hard to help you to learn and to make sure you enjoy being at school. Your school is well led and managed and is continually improving but I have asked it to do the following two things to improve it even further.

Give teachers in charge of subjects opportunities to observe lessons so that they can find ways of making teaching and learning even better

Develop links with schools and other organisations in the United Kingdom and overseas so that you can gain a better understanding of the way communities live in other parts of the world.

You can all help by always doing your best and making sure you know your targets.

I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Clive Lewis

Lead inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**