

Meadlands Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102893
Local Authority	Richmond upon Thames
Inspection number	355279
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2011
Reporting inspector	John Earish

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	224
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Amanada Leen
Headteacher	Rob Meakin
Date of previous school inspection	10 July 2008
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 15 lessons, with nine teachers being seen. Meetings were held with the members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at school documentation including teachers' planning, assessment information, safeguarding policies and samples of pupils' work. Inspectors analysed 113 questionnaires from parents and carers, 49 from pupils and 18 from staff.

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

- The progress in mathematics, especially at Key Stage 1, to see if it is sufficient.
- The impact of marking and target setting on pupils' understanding of how they can improve their work.
- The effectiveness of leaders and managers in securing and sustaining improvements, particularly in relation to progress in mathematics. The effectiveness of leaders and managers in securing and sustaining improvements, particularly in relation to progress in mathematics.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school, where just under one third of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. A few pupils are at the early stages of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities varies from year to year but is usually lower than the national average. Their range of needs includes specific learning difficulties, speech and language delay and behavioural, language and emotional difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. Children in the Nursery and Reception Class are taught in a Early Years Foundation Stage unit. The school has secured numerous awards, including the British Council International School award and Healthy Schools status. The governing body provides a breakfast club and additional extended provision for nursery children in the afternoon.

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

This is a good school. It is held in high regard by pupils, parents and carers, with whom it engages exceptionally well. One, representing the views of many, wrote, 'This is an excellent school and we have been delighted in every aspect.' Another added, 'The school not only develops the academic aspects of my children's learning but provides an extraordinary amount of high quality pastoral care.' Pupils are eager to learn, enjoy attending and behave well.

The school is dismantling the barriers to learning with determination, successfully building pupils' self-esteem and enabling all groups to achieve well. Good leadership and management have resulted in a very positive ethos where all pupils and staff are highly valued. Subject leaders and middle managers are increasingly effective at sustaining improvements in the quality of teaching and have, for example, recently introduced a peer mentoring and coaching programme across Key Stage 2. The governing body supports the school effectively and is playing an expanding role in strategic management and the cycle of self-review. Accurate and detailed self-evaluation of the school's performance has highlighted any underachievement. Areas where changes are needed have been identified and decisive action taken. The school improvement plan uses challenging targets well to accelerate the achievement for all groups of pupils. As a result of these positive features, the school has good capacity for sustained improvement.

Children make an excellent start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage and quickly become confident and enthusiastic learners. The school is building successfully on this very secure foundation to their learning and is ironing out inconsistencies in pupils' progress from year-to-year, especially in mathematics. Teachers have, for example, increased significantly the numbers of pupils attaining the higher levels in mathematics this year, particularly by the end of Year 2, by closing the gap between the performance of boys and girls.

Teaching is good overall. There is an increasing amount of outstanding practice but some is still satisfactory. Teachers are much better at helping pupils develop a clearer understanding of how they can improve their work than they were at the time of the last inspection. They have successfully raised the levels of challenge and enjoyment during lessons by increasing the opportunities for pupils of all abilities to work independently or in small groups to solve problems and explore their own ideas. This has been particularly successful in mathematics. On a few occasions, teachers do not allow pupils, especially the more able, sufficient opportunities to work in this way or they fail to make the tasks sufficiently challenging to move learning onto the next stage, thus holding back pupils' progress.

The innovative and imaginatively planned curriculum contributes well to pupils' good learning and enjoyment. The impressive range of additional activities enhances pupils'

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experience of school and captures their enthusiasm for learning. It is well balanced and there are effective links between the different areas of learning so that skills learned in numeracy, literacy and information and communication technology are developed well in other lessons. However, there are some missed opportunities within planning to exploit fully opportunities for pupils to work independently and use their initiative. The well-organised and well-run breakfast club and additional extended provision for Nursery children are very much appreciated and valued by parents and add much to the children's enjoyment of school.

Pupils are extremely well cared for and feel exceptionally safe and secure. Their positive attitudes to each other, their learning and their determination to succeed are reflected in above average attendance, which continues to rise. An outstanding range of partnerships with other schools and the wider community makes an excellent contribution to pupils' good achievement and the outstanding care and support they receive. The school's strong emphasis on promoting healthy lifestyles, recognised in its national award, ensures that pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay fit and healthy. Pupils show excellent concern for the needs of others and make a major contribution to the local and wider community. For example, they willingly take on responsibilities, are enthusiastic recyclers and act as ambassadors at the borough sustainability conferences.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching so it is consistently good or better by capitalising on opportunities for pupils, especially the more able, to work independently, or in groups to solve problems, explore their own ideas and use their initiative.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils' attainment is above average overall by the end of Year 6. Progress is good overall from levels that are lower than expected for the age group at the start of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils achieve well, including minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are positive about their learning and make similarly good progress to that of their peers. The few pupils who are at very early stages of learning English also make good progress and achieve well. Pupils' good basic skills and positive attitudes to learning mean that they are well prepared for the next phase of their education.

Pupils show great pride in the accomplishment of tasks, present their work neatly and take full advantage of opportunities to work collaboratively and cooperatively. In a Year 6 science lesson, for example, pupils were devising ways of separating sand, salt and metallic objects without touching the mixture with their hands. They discussed the properties of the mix and then worked out ways to tackle the task. They achieved this without the direct intervention of the teacher because they were able to confidently share ideas with each other. On another occasion, Year 2 pupils were playing 'Give Us A Clue' and were challenged to describe as many geometrical shapes as possible to their friends within two minutes without using their hands. They all joined in enthusiastically and used mathematical vocabulary very well. One girl said, 'It has four sides and they are all equal and the corners are right angles'. Yes, it is a square. Next it has two sides that are the same but they are opposite each other. Hurry! What is it?' Pupils thoroughly enjoyed this activity because it was well matched to their abilities and they responded very well to the

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challenge. Occasionally, pupils' enthusiasm wanes a little when they are not sufficiently stimulated or challenged by the work they are asked to do.

In their responses to the questionnaires, the overwhelming majority of pupils said they feel extremely safe in school and they have great confidence in the adults around them. They feel their ideas are listened to, for example through the activities of the school council and the local authority pupil parliament. The pupils are also involved in charity work, environmental projects and in assisting their peers in understanding and respecting other people's values and beliefs. Their awareness of the international dimension of the school through activities such as bilingual storytelling is well developed and ensures they all share a strong set of common values. This is recognised in the British Council International School award.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ 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?

In most lessons, teachers share the learning objective with the class so that all understand what they must do and achieve by the end of the lesson. Pupils say teachers have increased the opportunities for them to solve problems, particularly in mathematics, which makes learning both enjoyable and challenging. Some older pupils commented that this was helpful because it 'makes you put all your bits of knowledge together for a purpose and it helps you remember'. Teachers generally use their assessment of pupils' progress well to meet pupils' different needs. For example, pupils commented that they generally

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found teachers' marking helped them to improve their work and some of the older pupils were able to explain the level at which they were working. However, there are inconsistencies. Occasionally, the pace of learning is too slow because opportunities for pupils to work independently and use their initiative are not fully exploited.

Pupils have very many opportunities to take part in enrichment activities and to work in partnership with other local schools. For example, links through a local school's mathematics project have increased pupils' interest, enjoyment and self-esteem. Pupils are proud of their artistic and sporting achievements and eagerly participate in the very many clubs and activities that are organised for them. Teachers make very good use of opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of sustainability and environmental learning through the use of the school's excellent grounds and links with the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew and Richmond Schools Environmental Forum. Parents and carers very much appreciate these extra activities that enrich their children's education.

The school provides an extremely safe, secure environment. It works exceptionally well with parents and carers to support pupils' learning and ensure their well-being, and draws on a wide range of outside specialists when required. The support pupils receive is both sensitive and considered and is very much valued by everyone. As one parent put it, 'The partnership between the school and the specialist speech and language unit •.has maximised my daughter's learning experience.' Another added, 'The school is excellent at treating the child as an individual and taking a holistic and rounded view of education.' As a result, pupils, and their parents and carers have very great confidence in the staff and the school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The strong impact of leadership is seen in the way the headteacher and the leadership team are embedding ambition and driving improvement. The personal leadership of the headteacher is outstanding. Subject leaders monitor closely the performance of groups and individuals within their subjects and hold teachers to account for the progress made by children in their care. The expertise of the management team is being developed well so that members can take on more responsibility for ensuring consistency across classes and phases.

The governing body ensures that safeguarding procedures are of good quality and that all statutory requirements, including child protection requirements and risk assessments, are in place. It is increasingly involved in holding the school to account for its performance in order to sustain the drive for continuous improvement.

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The school has excellent relationships with parents and carers and encourages them in their own personal development as well as assisting them in fully supporting their children's learning. For example, teachers have devised their own video presentations, accessible via the school website, to help parents understand more about the teaching of phonics and mathematics. There is an excellent range of constructive partnerships with other local schools and agencies to provide and enrich the pupils' learning experiences.

The contribution the school makes to community cohesion is good. This is a harmonious school. While links with the immediate community and internationally are very well developed, pupils' knowledge and understanding of other communities in the United Kingdom are not as strong. Adults at all levels are good at promoting equal opportunities and eliminating discrimination through raising the pupils' expectations of what they can achieve and providing interesting and challenging activities for them.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle very quickly in the Early Years Foundation Stage unit and benefit from very well-structured routines and organisation that help them to feel extremely safe, secure and excited about coming to school. They have very positive attitudes to learning because staff have an excellent knowledge of the needs of the age range and plan exciting activities that are closely matched to children's stages of development and interests.

The balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities is very good across all areas of learning and children benefit from excellent opportunities to promote independence, investigation and communication skills. For example, children were involved in a role play about a day at the seaside. An adult pretended she was in difficulty in the sea and the children were challenged to find ways of getting help to her. One group suggested phoning the fire station while another advised dialling 999 and contacting the lifeboat.

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Adults used this opportunity extremely well to develop children's language skills, their understanding of the world about them and their number skills. They happily collaborate together, taking turns and using the interactive whiteboard to great effect.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those at the early stages of speaking English are identified quickly and supported very effectively. Consequently, all groups of children are extremely well supported. Tracking shows development over time is rapid and children from all backgrounds flourish in the caring environment. The vast majority of children behave exceptionally well and they confidently make choices and access the resources they need.

Observations and assessments are detailed and meticulous in all aspects of learning. This enables staff to monitor precisely children's progress towards the early learning goals and accurately identify gaps in their learning. However, there are missed opportunities to display the written work around the setting, particularly in the outdoors, to support the development of communication, language and literacy.

Leadership and management are excellent. Great care is taken to guarantee that all children are equally involved. Safety and safeguarding are high priorities. The quality of provision is excellent. Teaching is never less than good and is mostly outstanding. As a result, children make outstanding progress and all groups achieve extremely well.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire was above the national average for a primary school. They were overwhelmingly positive. Where they added comments, they tended to commend the staff and the level of care, and more generally reported their overall level of happiness with the school. The very small number of individual criticisms were followed up with the headteacher during the visit, but followed no particular pattern. The views of the parents and carers who spoke informally to inspectors at the beginning of the school day confirm the very positive responses in the questionnaires.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Meadlands Primary school 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 113 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 224 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	86	76	24	21	3	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	86	76	26	23	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	79	70	34	30	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	68	60	45	40	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	82	73	30	27	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	74	65	38	34	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	68	60	43	38	2	2	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)	73	65	36	32	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	72	64	39	35	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	64	57	46	41	1	1	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	64	57	44	39	1	1	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	84	74	28	25	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	90	80	23	20	0	0	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



10 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Meadlands Primary School, Richmond, TW10 7TS

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We were very impressed with your friendliness and your sensible and helpful attitudes towards each other. We believe, like you, that you go to a good school. We also feel that some aspects of your school are outstanding, especially the care, guidance and support you receive.

You behave well, which means that your teachers can get on with teaching you new and interesting things without the distraction of any misbehaviour. We particularly enjoyed talking to you about your work and were impressed with your enthusiasm for school. The teaching in your school is good and often better, and it means that, together with your positive attitudes to work, you make good progress and attain standards that are above the national average.

You also told us that you find your lessons interesting and usually challenging. To make the school even better, we have asked your teachers to give you even more opportunities to use your own initiative during lessons and to work independently. This will help you to make even faster progress.

We know that you will continue to work hard and we are sure that you will help your teachers to make your school even better.

We hope that you have great success in the future.

Yours sincerely

John Earish

Lead inspector

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