

# The Mead Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	132092
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	360363
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 July 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Edwards HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	482
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mel Jacob
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lyssy Bolton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 October 2007
<b>School address</b>	Hackett Place Trowbridge BA14 7GN
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 20 lessons and observed 14 teachers and held meetings with the headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body and other representatives of the governing body, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at the school documentation including evidence from the school's self-evaluation process. They also analysed questionnaires completed by 226 parents and carers, 100 pupils and 41 staff.

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

- How the school ensures that the transition at each key stage supports pupils' continual learning and progress.
- The extent to which teaching challenges as well as supports pupils, throughout the school, to secure and maintain accelerated progress and outstanding achievement.
- How well the school ensures equality of opportunity for all pupils.
- The extent to which leaders at all levels demonstrate a strong and sustainable capacity for further improvement.

## Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average sized primary school that serves two distinct residential areas of Trowbridge on two separate school sites. This follows the amalgamation with another small primary school in September 2009. There are two classes for each year group on the larger site and three classes covering the four to 11 age range on the smaller site. Most pupils are of White British heritage and a small number of pupils are from a range of minority ethnic groups. A few of these are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. A few pupils come from military backgrounds which results in an above-average movement of pupils in and out of the school throughout the school year. The school holds national awards for its high-quality provision in physical education, ICT, the arts, its international work, and its healthy approach to the pupils' lifestyles.

**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?**

**1**

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

**1**

## Main findings

The Mead is an outstanding school. The amalgamation has been highly successful. This demonstrates very well the expert leadership skills and commitment of the headteacher, staff and governing body in securing a high-quality education for all pupils. Leaders and managers at all levels have maintained and built upon the school's previously outstanding performance in all key areas. For example, great care is taken to support pupils' transition into the school and on to their secondary education. Despite the challenge of high mobility, an excellent learning culture and strong inclusive ethos ensure that transition through the school and beyond is now seamless and a hallmark of this school. Consequently, pupils' learning and progress are outstanding.

Children get off to an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of the outstanding provision that has been carefully planned to engage children's interests and support them to make very good progress in their learning. By the time children enter Key Stage 1 they are very well prepared to continue with their learning. Most pupils continue to develop good attitudes to learning and hone their basic skills very well in Key Stage 1. By the time they leave school at the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils' attainment is above average in English and in line with the national average for mathematics. The school's leaders are aware of the need to raise standards further in mathematics and to ensure pupils' targets in this subject are consistently challenging.

Pupils appreciate the way teachers work hard to make learning exciting. One pupil summed up the views of many by saying, 'Our school has a lovely family feel. You learn a lot by having fun!' The school indeed provides a very impressive curriculum as well as a wide range of extra-curricular clubs for which the take up by pupils is high. The amazing and well-managed school grounds also make a significant contribution to the all-round learning experiences enjoyed by pupils.

Teaching throughout the school is at least good, with much that is outstanding. This is because teachers' subject knowledge is extensive and ensures that all pupils and identifiable groups, such as those with specific learning needs and pupils learning English as an additional language, are appropriately challenged to do their best. The work of the school is rigorously monitored by senior leaders, and outcomes are communicated regularly to the governing body which helps it to shape the strategic direction of the school very well. Assessment information is used very well by teachers to identify pupils' next steps in learning as well as to measure how much progress they are making towards their challenging targets. Teachers' marking and feedback make a significant contribution to the excellent progress pupils make in their work. Support staff are highly valued by the school and well trained. They also work very closely with teachers to provide support that is carefully tailored to meet the needs of individual pupils and groups.

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The carefully managed accountability and professional development of all staff underpin this excellent provision and the high level of morale that is evident within the school. Self-evaluation is extremely thorough, accurate and appropriately focused on improving outcomes for pupils. The governing body holds the school very well to account because it is kept very well informed by the school and ensures that school improvement plans are regularly reviewed and accurately focused on improving learning outcomes for pupils. The school's capacity for further improvement is excellent.

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

- Ensure that pupils' targets, in mathematics, consistently challenge them to achieve even higher standards that are more in line with those for English.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**1**

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they enjoy very positive relationships with adults. They are proud of their school and regard it as a community. Pupils are highly motivated and engage enthusiastically in lessons, demonstrating a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them. Pupils say they feel very safe in school. They play well together, and say that incidents of bullying are rare and they know whom to talk to if they have concerns. Pupils' understanding of how to use information and communication technology safely is particularly well developed. Pupils speak confidently about what constitutes a healthy diet and lifestyle. Strategies to support pupils in attending school are thoroughly implemented so that attendance remains high.

Since the last inspection children now enter the Reception class displaying skills and abilities that are often below those typically expected for their age. However, through the careful monitoring of pupils' learning and progress the school has been able to identify and provide for pupils' individual learning needs very effectively. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment is above average, especially in English, although it is more variable in mathematics. Consequently, national tests results for 2011 demonstrate above-average attainment in English and average attainment in mathematics. Lesson observations and a scrutiny of pupils' work confirm that pupils' attainment is now securely above average in all other year groups. Consequently, overall achievement throughout the school is outstanding.

Pupils' basic skills for learning are particularly well developed and practised within the curriculum. They demonstrate excellent concentration in lessons and are committed to succeeding in all areas of learning. The early identification of pupils' learning needs and the consistent support for all groups of learners are notable strengths of the school. More-able pupils, those with particular gifts and talents, and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities often make excellent progress because support is very well organised and matched to their individual learning needs. As a result, pupils identified as needing additional support make excellent progress in learning and often achieve in line with national expectations. Pupils are enabled to contribute very positively to the school and wider community. Through the creative use of the local environment, visits to places of interest and participation in national competitions and festivals, pupils gain a good, first-hand appreciation of the United Kingdom as a culturally diverse society.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

Teachers use their very good subject knowledge to plan stimulating lessons that provide appropriate challenge for pupils. However, leaders are fully aware of the need to raise standards further in mathematics and this is a current priority of the school. Time is used exceedingly well throughout the school day to provide pupils with every opportunity to learn new skills or consolidate their understanding. This is because teachers and support staff plan and work very closely together to ensure that pupils engage positively with their work at all times. Pupils appreciate the effort teachers put into planning their lessons. One pupil summed up the views of the majority by saying, 'Every day you never know what you're going to do, so it's exciting.'

The curriculum has been very well designed to engage pupils at all times in learning. The school has also led the way for other schools in developing a creative approach to the curriculum and by helping to develop colleagues' questioning skills. The school's learning environment indoors and outdoors is amazing. It provides a wealth of high-quality learning experiences that are constantly being updated and improved. Every aspect of the grounds surrounding the school has been utilised to provide a high quality of learning opportunities for pupils. For example, year group gardens are particularly impressive: they are beautifully maintained and offer pupils hands-on experience of growing their own fruit and vegetables.

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Excellent attention is given to all aspects of care, guidance and support. Teaching assistants work very closely with small groups or individuals and contribute most effectively to the assessment of pupils' learning. The school has worked effectively to develop and strengthen transition arrangements at each stage of pupils' movement between classes and key stages. Transfer onto the next stage of their education is made as seamless as possible for pupils and so they remain confident about the future. One pupil summed up the views of the majority by saying, 'Transition days went well and they were great fun! I made lots of new friends.' Pupils who enter the school at other times during the school year are also very well supported and settle quickly to their learning.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership of the school is held in high regard by all who work in the school and the local authority. Confidence in the headteacher was endorsed further when the school was asked to provide assistance to another local school requiring significant support. This eventually led to the successful amalgamation of both schools to secure the continuation of a high-quality education for all pupils. The success of the school has been as a result of the headteacher's commitment to providing child-centred learning and holding high expectations of all staff. Consequently, she has gathered around her a cohesive team of enthusiastic and highly aspirational professionals who are demonstrating the ability to provide an outstanding learning experience for all pupils.

All adults are appropriately trained and regularly updated in the procedures for safeguarding pupils and the school is exceptionally vigilant in keeping records and so cares and provides very well for the safety of pupils. Rigorous and extensive monitoring of all aspects of the school's work promotes a culture of searching analysis and self-challenge that enables leaders to devise exceptionally well-focused plans for further improvement. The school's actions have a markedly beneficial impact on community cohesion within its local community and beyond so that there is very good access to equal opportunities for all pupils and any possible barriers to achievement are removed. Consequently, pupils and their families are made to feel very welcome and encouraged to contribute in any way they can.

The governing body plays a significant role in the life of the school. A comprehensive audit for community cohesion has led to a detailed action plan that ensures pupils develop, during their time at The Mead, a very clear understanding and experience of cultural diversity at a local, national and international level. The governing body deploys its skills and time wisely. Through effective communications governors are kept very well informed

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by the headteacher and senior leaders about the work of the school. They are able to hold the school to account in a rigorous yet respectful and supportive way and, as a result, they contribute very effectively in setting the strategic direction of the school.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children start school with skills and abilities that are below those expected for their age. However, children make excellent progress, particularly so in their personal, social and emotional development, and they are well prepared to continue their learning at the start of Key Stage 1. This is because teaching is of the highest quality and centred on the needs of the individual child.

Trusting and supportive relationships are quickly established between the school, children and their parents and carers. Good communications with parents and carers ensure high levels of satisfaction and include frequent opportunities for parents and carers to contribute to the recording of their children's achievements. For example, through contributing to children's learning journals.

The learning environment is outstanding both inside and outside because activities are very well planned to provide for children's interests as well as their learning needs. All activities are carefully thought through to engage and support children's learning, for example the well-resourced role-play areas with many features that appeal particularly to boys, such as a castle under the sea and a life-size kayak. There are plenty of opportunities for children to develop their writing skills indoors and outdoors and the detailed monitoring of children's skills development and progress result in teachers developing a comprehensive understanding of children's strengths and next steps in learning.



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The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage has shown commitment and determination to ensure equality of provision has been established and maintained on both school sites and is highly reflective and ambitious for further improvements. All adults are excellent role models and work very effectively together as a team which is having a very positive impact on the rates of children's learning and progress, particularly in their acquisition of communication, language and literacy skills.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
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 overwhelming majority of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were very positive about the school. There were many positive comments about how much their children enjoy school. One parent summed up the views of the majority by writing: 'The Mead is an excellent school, I am confident in the knowledge that my child is being given the best educational opportunities possible.'

A small minority of parents and carers also expressed their concerns in their responses. For example, they would appreciate further clarification regarding how inappropriate behaviour, when it does occur, is dealt with and how well-behaved pupils are rewarded. A few parents and carers would like more opportunities to consult with teachers on their children's progress, and some raised concerns that the school's focus on the wider curriculum may detract from some pupils developing their literacy and numeracy skills. Inspectors found these concerns do not have a negative impact in any way on pupils' learning or progress. In fact, inspectors judge the overall quality of children's learning experiences to be outstanding and the school continues to do all it can to ensure effective communications with parents and carers are maintained.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Mead Community 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 226 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 482 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	129	59	78	35	9	4	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	154	70	58	26	7	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	112	51	89	40	13	6	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	114	52	78	35	15	7	6	3
The teaching is good at this school	127	58	74	34	9	4	2	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	106	48	88	40	18	8	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	108	49	104	47	2	1	1	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)	137	62	70	32	8	4	3	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	105	48	87	40	16	7	5	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	76	35	91	41	29	13	12	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	78	35	84	38	36	16	8	4
The school is led and managed effectively	100	45	85	39	14	6	8	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	111	50	88	40	12	5	4	2

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](http://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"><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.**



8 July 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of The Mead Community Primary School, Trowbridge BA14 7GN**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We were particularly impressed with your very good behaviour and your enthusiasm to learn in lessons. We have decided that yours is an outstanding school. That means that your teachers and all those who work in the school support you in your learning very well. Not only do you clearly enjoy your learning, but you make very good progress and you achieve above average standards in English and are in line with the national average in mathematics by the time you leave school at the end of Year 6. The support and guidance you enjoy from all the adults who work in your school are exceptional because your headteacher, staff and governors work very closely together to provide you with fantastic learning experiences. I was not surprised therefore to find that your attendance is high. Well done, keep it up!

Those of you we spoke with told us the school is a very safe place, and that you learn a lot about staying healthy through regular exercise and eating a healthy diet. We noticed that you work well together in lessons and have plenty of opportunities to learn using your amazing school grounds that have been carefully filled with activities and experiences to support and extend your learning (I was particularly impressed with how successful you are at growing flowers and vegetables!). Another strength of your school is the way those of you who sometimes find learning challenging are given really good support so that many of you make excellent progress in all you do.

Even in an outstanding school like yours there will always be things to improve upon, so we have asked your headteacher to make sure that the teaching of mathematics challenges you to achieve just as highly as you do in English.

Finally, I would like to say how much I enjoyed hearing some of you singing and I hope all of you, in time, take up the many wonderful opportunities on offer to you in your school. You and your teachers have all worked very hard this year so I hope you all have an enjoyable summer holiday. I wish you well for your futures.

Yours sincerely

David Edwards

Her Majesty's Inspector

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