

# The Meads Primary School

Mill Way, East Grinstead, West Sussex RH19 4DD

**Inspection dates** 24–25 January 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Require improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils are not making as good progress in mathematics as they do in reading and writing.
- The most able do not always do as well as they should because work is not always hard enough for them.
- In some lessons, teachers concentrate too much on the activity that pupils are going to do rather than on what pupils are going to learn.
- Pupils do not always know how well they are doing or how to improve their learning.
- The headteacher checks the quality of teaching, but leaders, managers and governors have not been effective enough to ensure teaching helps pupils to make consistently good progress.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils enjoy school, feel safe, behave well and show respect to each other.
- The opportunities which pupils are given to take responsibility and to develop socially, morally, culturally and spiritually are strengths of the school.
- Pupils make good progress in reading throughout the school. This subject is well taught; pupils enjoy reading and develop good skills in deciding the meaning of the text.
- The headteacher and current senior leaders have responded to past dips in performance with firm actions. As a result, standards in reading and writing at the end of Year 6 improved in 2012. This shows that the school has the capacity to continue to improve.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons. Eight were jointly observed by either the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- In addition, inspectors listened to two groups of pupils read, and made two visits to reading sessions and provision for pupils' learning outside the classroom to focus on specific aspects.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, members of the governing body and senior leaders. A meeting was held with a representative from the local authority to discuss the nature and impact of support provided for the school.
- Inspectors took account of 47 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, the views of 20 parents and carers who communicated with inspectors during the inspection, and 20 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including information about how well pupils progressed, self-evaluation, school development and improvement documentation, performance management documentation, minutes of governing body meetings, and school policies and records relating to behaviour, safety and attendance.

## Inspection team

David Webster, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Wendy Forbes

Additional Inspector

David Westall

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The Meads Primary School is above average in size.
- Apart from the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, who are taught in two single-age classes, all other pupils are taught in mixed-age classes.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action, school action plus, or have a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- A below-average proportion of pupils is eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in local authority care.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The governing body manages an early morning nurture group, which was not inspected as it was closed owing to unavailability of staff.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better, by:
  - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can do so that they can all achieve well
  - making sure that teachers explain to pupils what skills and knowledge they will be learning from classroom activities and what they need to do to improve their work
  - making sure that when teachers mark pupils' work, they give pupils a clear idea of how well they are doing and how to improve.
- Increase rates of progress in mathematics, particularly for the most able, by:
  - ensuring that teachers provide activities that more accurately match pupils' different abilities and provide just the right level of challenge
  - ensuring pupils have more opportunities in lessons to practise and extend their knowledge and understanding of basic skills in mathematics so that they can use these skills to solve problems.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that senior leaders:
  - check teaching with a sharper focus on the progress pupils are making
  - encourage teachers to reflect better on how well they are helping their pupils learn and make good progress.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- In recent time, too few pupils have made rapid enough progress between Years 2 and 6 in mathematics. Although progress in reading and writing is stronger, too many pupils, especially the more able, have made limited progress in mathematics because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- After a dip in pupils' attainment in English at the end of Year 6 in 2011, Year 6 pupils' average points scores rose again in 2012. This has been due to the focus on improving teaching, the better use of assessment information to track how well pupils are doing, and the drive for improvement in literacy.
- By the end of Year 6, standards achieved in reading and writing are broadly average and improving rapidly. However, standards in mathematics remain below average.
- Most pupils start in the Reception class with skill levels and abilities generally below those typically expected for their age, particularly in speech and language, and calculating. They make good progress overall because teaching is good and the curriculum is well planned.
- Systematic teaching of letters and sounds and a focus upon early reading and writing ensure all pupils progress well in reading. By the end of Key Stage 2 they are confident readers and here they benefit from the good teaching of guided reading.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs read with determination and growing confidence because the extra support provided by adults develops their knowledge and understanding of letters and sounds and because they are regularly heard reading.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is similar to that of other pupils at the school. In 2012, the small number of pupils supported by the pupil premium achieved approximately half a level lower than their peers. Funding has been used effectively to provide a variety of extra support for these pupils to help them develop their communication, literacy and mathematical skills. This is leading to improvements in their rates of progress, particularly in reading, and is beginning to close the gap between their achievement and that of their fellow pupils.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because it is not consistently good.
- In some lessons the pace of learning is slow because expectations are not high enough and work is not well matched to pupils' abilities. There is too much focus on completing tasks rather than on the learning involved. As a result, pupils' interest is lost and their learning suffers. When more-able pupils are not challenged sufficiently, for example through skilful questioning, their response can be, 'This is easy.'
- The marking and assessment of work is regular, but the quality of advice given on how to improve work is inconsistent and not always followed through by teachers and pupils. As a result, the progress of some pupils is slower than it might otherwise be.
- Actions taken to develop pupils' skills in writing and in mathematical problem solving, for example through changes in the curriculum, have started to improve the quality of their work but still require further development.
- Where teaching is effective, teachers hold high expectations, indicate clearly what they want pupils to learn, set a brisk pace and set imaginative, practical, learning tasks. A good example of this was seen in a lesson in which pupils were using scales to measure out the food a family would need under conditions of wartime rationing. Pupils' interest was captured and sustained at high levels as they worked cooperatively at solving problems through accurate measurement and conversion between imperial and metric units in their 'family' groups.
- The systematic teaching of reading throughout the school, and particularly the focus on early

reading, has helped pupils make good gains in learning to read over time.

- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are supported well in lessons and in small groups by teachers and teaching assistants. Because the tasks they are set are well matched to their needs, they are interested in their learning and some are now beginning to make progress which is better than expected.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils have positive attitudes to school and enjoy coming to learn. Typically they get on well with one another, feel safe and show respect, courtesy and kindness to others regardless of age, race or disability.
- Pupils have a strong sense of fair play and are enthusiastic about opportunities to celebrate one another's efforts. In a 'Stars of the Week' assembly, for example, introduced by Year 6 pupils, warm applause accompanied the awarding of certificates to peers whose achievements had been recognised.
- Pupils are very proud of their responsibilities as members of the school council, arts council, sports council and eco council. The school council plays an active role, for example, it helps to improve the outside environment and works hard at fundraising for charitable events. Pupils who are monitors and technical assistants perform their duties conscientiously.
- Most parents and carers who expressed a view feel that behaviour is typically good and that their children are safe and happy at school. The positive atmosphere for learning in the school is evident. Pupils confirm that most lessons are hardly ever disrupted by poor behaviour.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe. They are well aware of the different forms of bullying such as name-calling and internet bullying, and say that bullying is not tolerated by the school and that any incident is always dealt with effectively by staff.
- Pupils are confident that adults know them well and care for them.
- Pupils have a good understanding of risk, which is strengthened by the school's instruction on personal and internet safety.
- Attendance levels have improved since the previous inspection and are now above the national average as a result of the school's work with both pupils and their parents and carers.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are not outstanding because there are a few pupils who do not fully engage in activities provided in their lessons. This is because some learning activities do not always motivate or interest them.

### **The leadership and management require improvement**

- Leadership and management require improvement because they have not yet led to securely good teaching and rapid enough progress.
- Effective leadership by the headteacher has created a school ethos where learning and progress are valued. She is supported well by a leadership team who demonstrate a commitment to the school's continuing improvement. All have an accurate grasp of its strengths and weaker areas. The steps they have taken to raise pupils' achievement have already secured improvements in reading and writing but there is still some way to go to raise pupils' achievement in mathematics.
- The headteacher has improved the way in which teachers are appraised. Performance targets are set which relate to pupils' progress, are regularly reviewed to let teachers know how they are performing, and are linked to the level at which teachers are paid.
- The local authority has provided proportionate support in assisting the headteacher with her steps to improve the school's performance and currently visits the school regularly to contribute to this process. The 'Leaders of Learning' project, for example, has developed the leadership

skills of staff and resulted in clear improvements in literacy.

- The school does well in promoting pupils' positive attitudes and respect for others. However, it does not fully meet the needs of all the pupils because it does not yet promote good achievement.
  - The curriculum is broad and balanced and makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development, their enjoyment of learning and their positive behaviour. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted through a range of clubs, many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and work together, a strong emphasis on the arts and appreciation of the wonders of the natural world.
  - Effective use of the pupil premium funding for identified groups of pupils has overcome barriers to their learning and raised their achievement, for example leading to improvements in their reading and filling in some of the gaps in their learning.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - The governance of the school has improved since the previous inspection. Training ensures governors have sharpened their focus on the school's performance, and this, together with restructuring and the addition of new members, is resulting in higher levels of challenge to the school. They talk with clarity about pupils' achievement and where this needs improving, but are less precise about the areas of teaching requiring improvement. Governors have a detailed understanding of how the pupil premium funding is spent and its impact. They ensure that systems to check the performance of teachers are robust and understand the link between performance and teachers' salary progression. Safeguarding is given high priority by governors to ensure compliance with all statutory requirements.
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## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	125964
<b>Local authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	402368

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	272
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Susan Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Rhona Perry
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 November 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01342 322905
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