

Meadstead Primary Academy

Meadstead Drive, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S71 4JS

Inspection dates 25–26 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good		2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good		2
Quality of teaching	Good		2
Achievement of pupils	Good		2
Early years provision	Good		2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide ambitious and purposeful leadership. They are well supported by senior staff and an effective governing body. As a result, the quality of teaching is good and pupils achieve well.
- Children make good progress in the early years. Children are inquisitive and keen to learn.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well throughout the academy in reading, writing, mathematics and many other subjects. Pupils strive hard to fulfil the academy's motto 'To make our best better - respect, believe achieve'.
- Pupils in the Communication and Interaction Resourced Provision (CIRP) make good progress and are well prepared for their future learning.
- The quality of teaching is good overall. Marking and feedback are used well to help pupils improve their own work. Teaching assistants make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
- Pupils are well behaved and feel safe. Classrooms are calm and orderly and pupils play and work well together.
- The curriculum is planned well and promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils, including those in the CIRP, take their responsibilities, such as academy ambassadors, seriously and contribute to the academy's positive ethos.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching is not yet outstanding. As a result, pupils' progress is not always the best it can be.
- Occasionally, pupils are set work which is not matched to their learning needs precisely enough.
- The pupils' development of fluid and cursive handwriting is not always promoted well.
- Some opportunities are missed for pupils to fully apply their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning throughout the academy, including two lesson observations carried out jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Inspectors also looked at a wide range of pupils' work and listened to several pupils read.
- Discussions were held with groups of pupils, the Chair of Governors and other members of the governing body, a representative of the Academies Enterprise Trust, and members of staff, including senior leaders and other leaders with particular responsibilities.
- The inspectors took account of 18 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View), the academy's own consultations with parents and spoke to parents during the inspection. The responses from staff to the inspection questionnaires were also considered.
- The inspectors observed the academy's work and looked at a range of documents, including: information on pupils' current progress, the academy's plans for improvement, the management of teachers' performance, the use of pupil premium funding, and documentation and records relating to pupils' behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

Andrew Clark, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Elizabeth Clarke

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Meadstead Primary became a sponsored academy school in June 2013. It is part of the Academies Enterprise Trust.
- The academy is smaller than an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is well above the national average. (The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.)
- The large majority of pupils are White British.
- Children attend the early years on a part-time basis in the Nursery and full time from Reception onwards.
- The academy houses a Communication and Interaction Resourced Provision (CIRP) for 10 pupils which is managed by the local authority. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs and are from across the local authority. The work of the CIRP is included in the inspection report.
- There is a breakfast club run by the academy. This is supported by the charity Magic Breakfast and is part of a national research project. A Children's Centre is co-located on the academy site. This is subject to a separate inspection report.
- The academy meets the current government's floor standard which is the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The headteacher was appointed to the academy in January 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching from good to outstanding to accelerate pupils' progress further by:
 - accurately matching all pupils' work to their learning
 - ensuring the highest quality of handwriting is consistently promoted
 - increase the number of opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills more fully in all subjects in addition to English and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has established a distinct and purposeful approach for improving the academy. She sets ambitious goals for all staff and pupils to achieve based on well researched initiatives and effectively delegated responsibilities. There is an accelerating pace of success in the quality of teaching and learning after an initial period of leadership change when the academy first opened. Staff morale is high and senior and middle leaders support the academy well.
- Procedures to analyse pupil progress and other aspects of their personal and academic achievement are good. These procedures ensure self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate. The academy is effectively implementing new assessment procedures in response to national curriculum changes, making good use of information and communication technology (ICT) to analyse and share outcomes with staff and the governing body.
- The academy has appropriate and rigorous procedures to ensure staff are held accountable for the progress pupils make. Teachers have to meet stringent criteria in order to achieve the next salary level. The headteacher and deputy headteacher set good examples to all staff and are skilled in observing teaching and setting challenging but achievable targets for other staff to aspire to. The headteacher and deputy ensure staff have access to good training and professional development opportunities and are clear about the aspects of teaching and learning in need of further development.
- Middle leaders contribute well to the increasingly effective use of strategies to develop the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress. This is making a good contribution to raising achievement, for example in mathematics and in writing. The improvements in teaching quality are also ensuring pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning.
- The CIRP is led and managed well. The staff work closely with the academy's special educational needs coordinator to make certain that the environment and curriculum planning supports the pupils' learning and personal development well. Many pupils based in the CIRP work alongside other pupils in the academy as often as possible to aid their future transition to secondary education. This also contributes to all pupils' social development through increasing their understanding of different emotional and learning needs.
- The Academies Enterprise Trust provides strong support to the academy. The trust has supported the academy through detailed measures of its effectiveness, the development of good quality policies and procedures, in special educational needs and safeguarding for example, and through training with other local schools within the trust.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to narrow the gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and others. All areas of expenditure are carefully reviewed and analysed to ensure developments, such as training for staff and ICT provision, have a maximum beneficial impact on the pupils the funding is intended for.
- Additional funding for sports and physical education is used well to develop provision, such as curriculum plans and outdoor playground resources. Specialist staff set high expectations and support teachers' further professional development. The proportion of pupils throughout the academy who regularly participate in sporting challenges and clubs, such as cross country running and gymnastics, has increased significantly since the academy opened.
- Leaders ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed and to participate fully in the life of the academy. Leaders promote positive relationships and there is no evidence of discrimination.
- Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements and are based on detailed and accurate record keeping. All staff are well trained and vigilant.
- The academy's curriculum is carefully monitored, which helps to ensure increasingly good teaching of literacy and numeracy skills. Effective use of ICT is helping pupils improve their own capability in, for example, spelling, grammar and mathematical calculations. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through a wide range of different subjects. The academy's promotion of the value of university degrees in enhancing career choices is raising pupils' aspirations and self-awareness. The impact of the wider curriculum helps to prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to ensure that pupils are applying learning in reading, writing and mathematics to the highest level they can in all subjects.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is led and managed well. The Chair of Governors is well trained and provides clear and pertinent leadership. Governors regularly receive and analyse accurate data on pupils' achievement, attendance, behaviour and the quality of teaching. Governors make good use of information to

challenge leaders to guide future improvement and address weaknesses. For example, governors ensure that the use of pupil premium funding is narrowing any gaps in achievement for all appropriate pupils including those in the CIRP and the early years. The governing body undertakes a good range of activities including classroom visits and discussions with pupils to further inform understanding. Governors have taken good advantage of training opportunities by the academy trust and national governance organisations to improve their skills and undertake a full review of their effectiveness.

- The governing body has a range of professional skills which are closely matched to their areas of responsibility. Policies are reviewed regularly and meet statutory requirements. The governing body and academy leaders make good use of multi-media, including the academy's website, to inform parents and share policies and procedures. The governors are fully and appropriately involved in reviewing targets for the headteacher and making decisions as to whether staff should receive a salary increase. The academy's finances are well managed.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and considerate towards each other and they respond well to the care that all adults show them. Pupils are proud of their academy. They play and work together well. Children in the early years often start with skills that are below typical for their age, particularly in their concentration levels and in their ability to play alongside others. They make rapid gains and quickly learn to persist in their work and play well together.
- Pupils have positive and effective attitudes to learning. They largely move quickly and efficiently to their tasks and work well with others. They are developing good skills to improve their own learning and find things out for themselves. Occasionally, they do not take enough care with their handwriting and sometimes lose concentration when work is not appropriately challenging. Pupils are rarely badly behaved and there are few exclusions. This is supported by the academy's high quality of record keeping.
- Classrooms are calm, orderly and attractive. The academy makes increasingly good use of outdoor spaces at break and lunchtimes and in the early years to promote pupils' social and cooperative skills. The 'Magic Breakfast' club contributes to pupils' readiness for the school day and the academy is closely monitoring its effectiveness.
- Pupils behave responsibly towards others. Pupils take their responsibilities as academy ambassadors and in other organisations seriously. They contribute to the development of rules for good behaviour. This adds well to their understanding of democracy, tolerance and fairness which are all actively promoted.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe, and the large majority of parents agree. Attendance is now average and improving. Pupils are punctual and well prepared for their days' work.
- Pupils have a good understanding of potential bullying situations, including those that may be racially based and when using the internet; they are confident to discuss any concerns and give good examples of how the staff successfully address the few issues that emerge.
- Pupils understand that their behaviour affects others and know that they should always try to be kind and considerate. Those who have emotional and social difficulties, including pupils in the CIRP, are effectively helped to manage their own behaviour, especially through work with well trained teaching assistants and other specialist staff.
- Pupils are thoroughly prepared for keeping themselves safe in later life. For example, the well-planned programmes of personal, social and health education, including work with health services, ensure pupils have a strong understanding of the dangers of drugs and alcohol. Pupils participate in role play activities led by emergency services which contribute fully to the development of their health and well-being.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils learn in a calm working atmosphere in all year groups and classes. They know that they come to the academy to learn and are ready and able to do so.
- The teaching of reading is good. Effective teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) from the early years onwards contributes well to pupils' success. Whole-academy reading projects and challenges promote pupils' enjoyment of reading and the development of their comprehension skills well.

The academy makes good use of computers and multi-media activities, both within the academy and at home, to sharpen pupils' reading skills and measure their progress. Special book days and use of the academy's library supports the teaching of pupils' referencing and non-fiction reading skills.

- Writing skills are taught well overall. Pupils are taught to spell accurately and the precise marking helps to address any weaknesses. Teachers regularly expect pupils to write for a wide range of purposes and apply the grammatical skills they are learning effectively. Marking and feedback is used well overall to help pupils' improve their own learning, especially in writing.
- The insistence on clear and fluent handwriting, however, is not consistently promoted particularly for the older pupils. Teachers do not always expect the highest standard in writing in all subjects.
- The teaching of mathematics is good and improving quickly to address past weaknesses in learning. Mental and calculation skills are taught systematically and regularly. Pupils now apply their skills through mathematical problems and investigations that extend and deepen their understanding.
- Teachers and teaching assistants ask thoughtful questions to help pupils to secure new knowledge and develop their thinking skills. They rarely accept simple or superficial answers. They routinely question pupils to check their progress during lessons.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning overall. They share teachers' mostly high expectations and provide a good balance of challenge and support to pupils of all abilities.
- The learning needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including pupils based in the CIRP, are understood well and teaching assistants and other staff who work with them are well-trained and well-informed. All pupils learn in a highly encouraging and motivating environment where they are taught that everyone can succeed. Group work on specific literacy or numeracy skills is linked to pupils' other studies when appropriate to help embed new learning.
- The most able pupils are taught well. Pupils of all abilities, but especially the most able, are effectively taught the skills to assess their own progress and work things out for themselves. For example, through using information around the classroom and in dictionaries and internet searches. This helps secure and deepen their learning.
- Homework makes a good contribution to pupils' learning, especially through the use of the academy's website and computer activities, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Sometimes, the work does not match the pupils' needs closely enough to ensure the best rates of progress. Now and then the most-able pupils, for example, are not challenged soon enough in the lesson to use and apply the knowledge they have already acquired. On a few occasions, the work is too hard for some pupils, particularly the less able, to complete without too much reliance on adults to tell them what to do.
- A few opportunities are missed to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills even further through different subjects. For example, sometimes teachers do not expect pupils to use the full range of their writing skills and produce work to the same quality in other lessons as they do in literacy lessons. Similarly, some opportunities are missed for pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Consequently, teaching is not outstanding and pupils are not consistently making the best rates of progress of which they are capable.

The achievement of pupils is good

- All groups of pupils achieve well through the academy. The progress of all groups of pupils is accelerating. This is evident in the academy's tracking of pupils' progress and in pupils' work over time. Pupils of all abilities are developing strong skills for managing and improving their own learning which increasingly contributes to their success.
- The results of National Curriculum tests for Year 6 were broadly average in 2014 and reflect a general overall trend of improvement since the academy opened. However, overall standards in mathematics were lower than those seen in reading and writing because fewer pupils achieved higher levels than the national average. This largely related to historical gaps in their learning due to earlier weaknesses in provision; despite rapid progress in Year 6, some pupils did not reach their full potential. However, this is no longer the case. The academy has taken robust action to improve the curriculum and the quality of teaching to fill any gaps and ensure that a larger proportion of pupils are working at above average levels.
- Results in reading and in tests for grammar, punctuation and spelling were slightly above average, especially for the most able pupils. Standards in Year 2 are average and reflect sustained good progress over time. The current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are working at levels broadly in line with those normally expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress overall and the gap between the standards they reach and

those of other pupils is reducing. In 2014, the results of National Curriculum tests for these pupils in reading and writing were approximately half a term behind other pupils in the academy, and in mathematics they were two and a half terms behind. The attainment of these disadvantaged pupils was in line with national averages for non-disadvantaged pupils in reading and writing, and slightly over two and a half terms below the national average in mathematics. The academy has taken decisive steps to address the weaknesses in mathematics and there is little evidence of any significant gap in the attainment of current pupils in Year 6. Throughout the academy, including in the early years, the gap between disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils compared with the national picture is reducing. This is supported by the academy's own progress data and the evidence of inspection.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their individual starting points. Their individual needs are accurately checked. Comprehensive, targeted teaching ensures these pupils make good academic and personal progress.
- Pupils in the CIRP make good progress over time from their individual starting points. Staff in the resourced provision and throughout the academy are very well informed about the pupils' individual learning and personal needs and the support they require to improve their achievement. A particular strength of the pupils' learning is often the successful integration with their peers in the academy and the effective management of their own learning and behaviour.
- The most able pupils make good progress overall and the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels is rising. They show good levels of maturity and an ability to show initiative and take the lead. They also make very good use of computers and reference books to research and investigate. In mathematics, they use mental and written calculation skills and general mathematical knowledge well to solve complex problems. For example, in Year 3 pupils plan their own strategic methods to quickly and accurately calculate the perimeter of irregular shapes using good mathematical vocabulary. The most able pupils have rapidly developing skills to improve their own work and act on the guidance they are given in marking.
- Pupils' achievement in reading is a strong feature of pupils' learning. Pupils' phonics skills are average in national assessments by the end of Year 1. Pupils read aloud with confidence, expression and fluency. Older pupils use their reading skills well in a wide range of subjects. They have a wide vocabulary and a good understanding of plot and character. Above all, they enjoy reading and are proud of their achievements.
- Pupils' achievement in mathematics is now good and rapidly improving. Their mental calculation skills are rapidly improving as the academy fills historical gaps in their learning.
- Writing skills are now good overall. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are largely accurate and used well in their independent work. Pupils write with a good awareness of their prospective audience in a range of styles. However, the development of a fluent and cursive handwriting style is not consistently promoted, particularly when pupils are working in subjects other than literacy.

The early years provision

is good

- Good leadership and management of the early years provision is successfully preparing children for the next stage in their education. The team are building on strengths in teaching and learning, especially through further use of computers in the accurate assessment and recording of children's progress. The quality of teaching is good. All staff have high expectations and a good understanding of the needs of children in the early years.
- Children's starting points are generally below those typical for their age. In particular, children's social skills are below those usually found as are their skills in early reading and writing. They make particularly rapid progress in these areas and, as a result, they are well prepared for Year 1. The percentage of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the Reception year is in line with the national figure and some are already working at the levels normally expected for pupils in Year 1, especially in reading.
- Children come from a wide range of prior early years experiences before they start at the academy. The staff establish good relationships with parents from the start through rigorous induction procedures. These procedures enable the staff to build a good initial knowledge of children's individual starting points and move quickly to establish a positive ethos for work and play and reduce any gaps in their learning.
- The most able children make good progress because they make rapid gains, especially in key skills such as phonics and number. They are regularly set additional challenges, such as designing and making an oven for the gingerbread man which he cannot escape from in their construction work, which encourages them to use their thinking and reasoning skills well.

- Reading and writing skills are well taught. Children of all abilities learn to form letters and words accurately. Staff make good use of the children's indoor and outdoor activities to encourage writing. The class themes are often built around good quality children's literature which motivates and secures learning in many aspects.
- Resources are of a high quality and children are eager to work with them. This contributes to their success in many areas of learning.
- Children are active and participate in a range of physical activities and games and there are plans to further extend opportunities for climbing and balancing through outdoor play. Children of all abilities work and play well together and concentrate on their activities. Their behaviour and safety is good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well and they are curious about the world around them. Children are constantly encouraged to make decisions about their work and review their learning. This contributes to growing self-awareness and pride in their achievement.

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

Unique reference number	139132
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	449902

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Amy Kitson
Headteacher	Wendy Baxter
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
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