

The Meadows Primary School

Bristol Road South, Northfield, Birmingham B31 2SW

Inspection dates

28–29 June 2016

Overall effectiveness

Good

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The school's leadership team and governors are very ambitious for all pupils. They have effectively tackled the issues for improvement from the previous inspection. The improvements made show that the school is well placed to sustain improvements.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are now good. Pupils' achievement has improved since the previous inspection. All groups of pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Personal development and welfare are good. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and behave well.
- Early years children make good progress in response to good teaching and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils enjoy school, feel well cared for and are safe in this happy and harmonious school.
- Governors work well with senior leaders. They are well informed and have appropriate skills to support and challenge school leaders effectively. This has led to improved teaching and outcomes for pupils.
- Pastoral support for pupils is a strength. The nurture group provides good support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those who are disadvantaged. This helps them to make the same rates of progress as other pupils in the school.
- Pupils in the resource base are well supported by teaching assistants who capture pupils' interest and enthuse them to want to learn. Pupils in the resource base make good progress and behave well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although pupils now make good progress, not enough pupils are provided with the opportunity to practise the skills they are taught and deepen their understanding to achieve their full potential.
- The curriculum overview does not provide enough guidance for teachers on how to teach pupils skills that will extend and deepen their understanding.
- Not enough pupils reach the expected standard in the screening check in phonics (the sounds that letters represent) at the end of Year 1. This is because some teachers do not teach letters and sounds effectively enough.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils further by:
 - ensuring that curriculum plans provide clear guidance for teachers on how to teach pupils study skills that enable them to extend their knowledge and understanding
 - making sure that teachers provide more opportunities in lessons for pupils to extend and deepen their knowledge and understanding
 - ensuring that more pupils reach the expected standard in phonics at the end of Year 1 to bring their achievement into line with, or exceeding, national figures
 - ensuring that teachers' subject knowledge in phonics is secure.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The school has gone through significant changes since the last inspection having expanded early years provision and the number of classes in Year 1. Leaders have successfully supported the school and the community through this period of change.
- School leaders and governors correctly identified the need to halt the declining picture in progress at the end of key stage 2 in 2015. Firm action was taken and rigorous systems were introduced to monitor and challenge the quality of teaching and improve pupils' progress across the school. As a result, teaching and pupils' outcomes have improved since the previous inspection and are now good.
- The headteacher, with the support of the deputy headteachers, has introduced robust systems for tracking and monitoring assessment information. This information is used well by leaders to identify gaps in learning and to direct resources to the pupils' individual needs. This means that any gaps in pupils' attainment are quickly closed.
- The leadership team has implemented effective systems to check on teachers' performance. Leaders regularly meet with staff to discuss teaching standards and ways of helping teachers to enhance their skills. This leads to the identification of best practice, which is then shared across the school to strengthen teaching.
- Teachers' marking has improved since the last inspection and all staff follow the school's policy on giving feedback to pupils. Pupils talk confidently about how marking helps them improve their work and say the guidance they receive from teachers is particularly effective in helping them to correct mistakes or rethink an answer.
- Pupil premium funding has been put to good use to support disadvantaged pupils. They now make good progress. Attainment gaps between disadvantaged pupils and others nationally are now closing in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Sports funding is used effectively. For example, teachers work alongside a specialist to help improve their skills in teaching physical education. The school has increased the range of sporting activities for all pupils, including those from the resource base. As a result, more pupils participate in different sports, both during the school day and in extra-curricular activities. The school promotes equality of opportunity well and ensures that there is no discrimination.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. The school's values are well embedded within the school curriculum, which is well designed and well planned. Pupils are taught the values of respect, the rule of law, democracy and tolerance. As a result, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The curriculum has a broad range of additional activities including clubs, trips and visitors, which engage pupils and support their academic development.
- Middle leaders have confidently grasped the demands of the new national curriculum and support teachers with their planning to ensure that there is a broad coverage of skills. However, these plans do not give enough guidance to teachers on how they teach the new curriculum to even greater depth. As a result, pupils are not given enough opportunities to master skills and move their learning on. This slows their progress.
- The Birmingham Education Partnership, which is commissioned by the local authority, has supported the school's leaders and governors to secure improvements and develop effective partnership with local schools. These partnerships provide opportunities for teachers to challenge each other, share good practice and moderate the standard of their work against other schools. Staff are grateful for these opportunities and talk confidently about how they have improved the quality of their teaching.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and hold the school leaders effectively to account.
 - Governors know what additional funding the school receives to support disadvantaged pupils in school and how this money is spent. They check and discuss disadvantaged pupils' progress information with senior leaders to ensure that gaps in learning are closed.
 - Governors ensure that performance management is carried out appropriately and know that teachers' performance can be reflected in pay awards. They work well with the headteacher and take appropriate action to tackle underperformance.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school ensures that all appropriate checks are carried out on staff and volunteers, and that all staff receive appropriate training, which is regularly updated. Governors and senior staff are well aware of their responsibilities with regard to the prevention of extremism and radicalisation. Most parents and carers responding to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agree that their children are safe in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The quality of teaching has improved throughout the school in reading, writing and mathematics since the previous inspection. This accounts for the improved progress pupils are making this year.
- Teachers know their pupils well and their relationships with pupils are a strength of the school. Lessons are interesting and motivate pupils well so that they want to learn.
- Teachers question pupils carefully, helping pupils to use their responses to check their understanding and reinforce learning. For example, in a mathematics lesson, pupils openly discussed an incorrect sum that had been placed on the board, were engaged in a discussion around any errors they could see, and had the confidence to question the teacher. Pupils spotted their own mistakes and moved their learning on.
- Teaching assistants are well trained and effectively identify and manage pupils' barriers to learning so that disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their various starting points.
- Assessment information is used well to identify where additional support and intervention are required in lessons. However, teachers do not always provide sufficient challenge to pupils, particularly for the most able pupils in order to deepen their understanding and extend learning still further.
- The good teaching in the resource base contributes very effectively to supporting pupils' progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are happy in school.
- Pupils say they are safe and also know how to keep themselves safe on the internet. They understand the potentially dangerous situations they may face and know what to do if they are concerned about something.
- Pupils show respectful attitudes to adults and one another. Pupils in key stage 2 enjoy undertaking roles of responsibility, such as acting as reading buddies. The younger pupils 'light up' with enthusiasm when their reading buddies appear at the classroom door. This demonstrates their positive relationships, self-confidence and maturity.
- The pastoral team has good systems in place to support the personal and emotional welfare of pupils. They effectively contribute to pupils' healthy lifestyles and their social and emotional development through the many opportunities they provide to promote pupils' lifestyle choices. For example, they work with groups of pupils at lunchtime and breaktime to promote healthy eating. Pupils spoken to talked enthusiastically about how they know eating healthy foods is an important part of a healthy diet.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare. They are confident that if bullying happens it is dealt with quickly by staff. School records reflect this and show that when bullying does occur the school takes appropriate action to resolve matters.
- Teaching assistants work effectively with pupils in the resource base and promote their personal development well. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to learning, and work happily with each other and with other pupils across the school.

Behaviour

- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are proud of their new school and take responsibility for keeping it clean and tidy.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. As one pupil said, 'We have fun every single day.' Pupils are confident, polite, friendly and welcoming to visitors. They willingly engage in conversation and are keen to talk about what they have been learning.
- Pupils display positive attitudes towards learning and exhibit good self-discipline.

- Pupils spoken to during the inspection said that behaviour is good and that incidents of disruptive behaviour are rare.
- The school's leaders work hard to encourage pupils to attend school regularly. There are effective systems in place for tracking and supporting pupils who are persistently absent. Although attendance is slightly below the national average, it is rising.
- Behaviour in the resource base is good. Pupils listen carefully to instructions and concentrate well. Parents of pupils in the resource base feel that their children are well supported and make good progress.
- Most parents responding to Parent View agree that pupils' behaviour is good.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Attainment at the end of Year 6 in 2015 was in line with the national picture. However, not enough pupils in Year 6 made the expected rates of progress across key stage 2. The leadership team effectively analysed school data and identified underachieving pupils across key stage 2. They took swift and effective action. Current school assessment information and the evidence seen in pupils' books during the inspection show that, from their starting points, all groups of pupils are now making good progress. Achievement has rapidly improved in reading, writing and mathematics.
- All groups of pupils in key stage 1 make good progress in developing their reading, writing and mathematical skills. As a result, achievement in key stage 1 has improved and increasingly more pupils are on track to attain or exceed age-related expectations by the end of the academic year.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils because leaders closely monitor and track their progress. As a result, disadvantaged pupils perform as well as their peers, achieve well and make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The most able pupils make the same rates of progress as other pupils in the school and are usually given work that is planned to match their ability level. However, the most able pupils should be doing better in some lessons as they are not provided with enough opportunities to practise skills that deepen their understanding or extends their learning further.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because leaders accurately put in the support to ensure that pupils' individual needs are met.
- Pupils say they enjoy reading. Year 6 pupils are confident readers. During the inspection, they were heard reading well and with expression. They could offer opinions about what they read and knew the difference between fiction and non-fiction books.
- Year 2 pupils, at times, struggled to use their knowledge of phonics when trying to read a new word. This is because the teaching of phonics is not yet good enough and not enough pupils reach the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1. This is because in some lessons teachers' subject knowledge is weak. As a result, pupils become confused and make errors which are not spotted and addressed by their teachers. School leaders have been active in identifying this weakness. They have recently introduced interventions with identified pupils. Consequently, evidence collected during the inspection shows that pupils are now starting to make better progress.
- Staff in the resource base know their pupils very well as individuals. They plan work carefully to meet their differing needs and, as a result, these pupils make good progress across all areas of their development.

Early years provision

is good

- A minority of children enter the early years with levels of development below those that are typical for their age. Children make good progress overall from their starting points. Consequently, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of Reception is close to the national figure. This means that children are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Staff work effectively together as a team. Leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the early years and know what needs to be done further to improve the learning experience of the children.
- Teaching in the early years is good and, as a result, all groups of children achieve well.
- The additional early years funding for disadvantaged children is used well, so that they make the same

progress in their learning as other children.

- Teaching is well planned and children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have their needs well met.
- There are many opportunities for children to develop reading, writing and mathematical skills. For example, while the register was taken, the children were engaged in finding missing numbers in a number sentence. This helped them practise their mathematical skills and throughout the activity they were able to correct how they formed their numbers by themselves.
- Children behave well, listen to adults, follow instructions carefully and play cooperatively with each other. Staff make good use of the range of indoor and outdoor activities and provide exciting learning activities.
- Leaders make sure that children are safe and enjoy their early years experiences. Leaders and staff make a strong contribution to children's safety, welfare and emotional development. Leaders and staff are well trained in keeping pupils safe. As a result, children are happy, safe, confident and independent learners.
- Early years leaders assess and track the children's progress well. Leaders keep a full record of how well children are doing in each area of their learning. There are positive relationships with parents. They value the information they are provided with about their children's progress, and appreciate how the school encourages them to become involved in their children's learning.

School details

Unique reference number	103296
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10012383

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	526
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jan Gane
Headteacher	Liane Barton
Telephone number	0121 6753203
Website	www.meadowsprimary.org
Email address	enquiry@meadowsprimary.org
Date of previous inspection	28–29 June 2016

Information about this school

- The Meadows Primary School is a large primary school where most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils learning to speak English as an additional language is much lower than that of most schools.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after) is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The school has additional resourced provision for pupils who have special educational needs. It is known as 'The Meadows Resource Base', with the capacity for 26 pupils with educational, health and care plans or with a statement of special educational needs. Pupils' additional learning needs are primarily for speech, language and communication development. The pupils are taught within three classes and, as appropriate, they integrate with pupils in mainstream lessons in their weekly timetable.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- There is breakfast and after-school provision on site run by a private Ofsted-registered business called 'Mini Meadows', which was not part of this inspection.
- Since the last inspection, the school has expanded so that the early years provision and key stage 1 now have three classes in each. A new-build project has enabled the school to cope with the growing numbers.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 21 lessons across the school to observe pupils' learning, four of which were visited jointly with a senior leader.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in books and heard pupils read. They held discussions with a group of pupils, as well as having informal conversations with them during lessons.
- Inspectors analysed documents, including school improvement plans, information on the school's view of its own performance, safeguarding documents and performance management procedures and policies. They examined records relating to personal development, behaviour, welfare, safety and attendance. Inspectors also looked at information about pupils' progress and achievement.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders. Meetings also took place with members of the governing body and representatives from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of 56 responses to Parent View and spoke with parents informally at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Kerry Rochester, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Lynda Townsend	Ofsted Inspector
Rowena Green	Ofsted Inspector

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