

Meynell Community Primary School

Meynell Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S5 8GN

Inspection dates

25–26 April 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have improved the quality of teaching significantly since the last inspection. However, teaching is not consistently effective in ensuring that pupils, including the disadvantaged, make strong progress in their learning.
- Last year, not enough pupils reached the standards expected in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Occasionally the most able pupils are not given work that challenges them enough to make the best possible progress in lessons.
- Despite the good improvements in pupils' attendance and punctuality over the last three years, some pupils still take too many days off school.
- A few staff do not use standard spoken and written English consistently. This hampers the progress pupils make, particularly those who have speech and language delays when starting school.
- A few pupils do not get the consistent support they need to learn to manage their behaviour when moving around school or at playtime. Similarly, a few pupils switch off in lessons when the work is not closely matched to what they need to learn next.

The school has the following strengths

- Since the last inspection, significant improvements have been made in all areas of the school's work. Leaders have developed the skills and knowledge needed to tackle past weaknesses and to continue to drive further improvements.
- Leaders ensure that staff and pupils benefit from opportunities provided through the Tapton School Trust. The executive headteacher from the trust has been key to the school's continued improvement.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive carefully planned support. Consequently, most make similar progress to other pupils in other schools. Support for pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable is equally effective.
- Since the last inspection, leaders have gained the support of the vast majority of parents who are positive about the partnerships developed.
- Improvements to the early years has ensured that children achieve well and are prepared successfully for the challenge of key stage 1.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Iron out the remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching to make sure that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and the most able, make the best possible progress in their learning by ensuring that:
 - the highly effective teaching in the school is shared more widely so that all teachers can learn from the best and apply consistently the school's chosen approach to lesson planning and delivery
 - staff consistently use spoken and written standard English.
- Improve the attendance and punctuality of those pupils who are still reluctant to attend by capitalising on the increased support from parents.
- Improve the behaviour of the few pupils who struggle to manage themselves, particularly when moving around school and when socialising with their classmates, by making sure that:
 - staff consistently use the school's behaviour management procedures
 - pupils understand the consequences of unkind words and actions to other pupils
 - pupils affected by the behaviour of other pupils are effectively supported, can confidently share their concerns and understand how staff can help
 - parents understand how to help their children develop positive friendships.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the last inspection, leaders have tackled past weaknesses and ensured that pupils make greater progress in their learning, attend more regularly and are better behaved. Leaders are diminishing the difference between the achievements of different groups of pupils effectively. They have captured the parents' support. This is a significant success considering the distance that needed to be travelled two years ago. Leaders know there is still more to do to realise their ambition that all pupils achieve their very best, and to ensure that action plans are tackling the remaining weaknesses.
- Leaders continually review and revise action plans to accelerate the school's improvement. Plans are robust and effective, reflecting the considerable improvements already made and identifying what is left to do. Leaders have the skills and commitment to continue their drive to overcome the legacy of previous underachievement. Crucially, they demonstrate the capacity to move the school forwards. Their capacity is most clearly demonstrated in the improvements seen in the early years provision, which is now good. Leaders have the strong support of staff and the vast majority of parents.
- The thread of determination to overcome the barriers many pupils face in their lives is tangible in all aspects of the school's work. All teachers have 'diminish the difference' targets to meet. This ensures that everyone is sharply focused on making sure that disadvantaged pupils, girls and boys, and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make rapid progress so they achieve the same standards across a range of subjects as pupils in other schools. The positive outcomes in key stage 1 in 2016 and current assessment information confirm that this approach is working. Leaders know the approach needs more time to embed fully across the school.
- Leaders are driving improvement in the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning and progress. Staff at different stages of their careers appreciate leaders' challenge and support, and the training opportunities provided through the academy trust. Teachers at the start of their careers describe convincingly how they use the techniques they observed in other trust schools to help them improve their practice and build up their 'toolbox' of ideas. Leaders have not held back from taking firm action when teaching is not as good as it should be.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. The range of subjects and enrichment activities promote learning and give pupils a good understanding of their community and the wider world. The 'learning challenge' approach tasks pupils to answer significant questions in a host of different ways – for example, challenging them to think, 'Why are rainforests so important?' Such challenges also develop pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills along the way.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop their social, moral, spiritual and cultural skills are effective. The physical education (PE) and sports leader uses the information he collects about pupils' involvement in an increasingly wide range of sports to understand what really engages the pupils and the difference this makes to their fitness and coordination. Consequently, he and other leaders are justified in their confidence about the effective use and impact of the primary PE and sport premium.

- Since the last inspection, there has been a sea change in the parents' views about the school. The vast majority of parents spoken to during the inspection and who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, are now confident that leaders are providing a safe and effective education for their children. A few parents have concerns about how some aspects of pupils' behaviour and personal development are managed. These concerns are being tackled by leaders and behaviour has improved considerably, although a few pupils are still not fully responding to the higher expectations leaders have.
- Occasionally, leaders use an alternative provider to meet the specific needs of individual pupils. They choose providers who have been checked and monitored by the local authority. They give detailed consideration as to how well providers can safely meet the needs of each pupil and help them to achieve well.
- Leaders continually seek ways to overcome pupils' barriers to learning. For example, leaders have introduced a range of activities to encourage pupils to read at home with their parents, and to develop the essential love of reading. Leaders are aware that they need to evaluate routinely what is increasing pupils' progress so that they reduce the potential risk of continuing with approaches that are not working well enough.

Governance

- Governors have a good understanding of the work of the school. They challenge and support leaders in a balanced and proportionate way. The decision to jointly govern the trust's three schools was a pragmatic response to a long-standing difficulty in securing enough governors for three separate boards. However, this decision has strengthened governance as individual governors' expertise and commitment have grown. It also supports the sharing of good practice across the three schools.
- Governors work hard to make sure that specific funding is used as well as possible. They recognise that the difference between the outcomes for pupils who are disadvantaged and other pupils nationally has reduced. However, they knew they needed to do more, so they conducted a thorough review of how the pupil premium was used. The resulting action plan is precise and monitored closely to make sure that actions are having the desired effect.
- Equally, governors are very aware of the positive impact of additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The decision to increase the number of staff in the inclusion team to give additional support to those pupils who have social, emotional and mental health needs has proved beneficial.
- Governors do not hold back from making difficult decisions to ensure that the right staff, including teachers, are working with the pupils. Importantly, they also ensure that staff are appropriately rewarded through performance-related pay.
- The governors are clear about who is responsible for different aspects of the school's work, between the governing body and the trust board. The role of the executive headteacher to monitor the progress of the school and the effectiveness of leaders is clear. Her detailed quality assurance reports provide an incisive view of what has been achieved and what more needs to be done.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders ensure that staff are suitable to work with children in the school. They train all staff in a wide range of safeguarding and child protection issues. This includes training to ensure that staff are aware of signs of radicalisation within a predominantly White British community.
- A high proportion of pupils need support from a range of different agencies because their personal circumstances make them vulnerable. Staff know how to report and record their concerns. The appropriate staff are diligent in ensuring that concerns are followed up by the right agencies in a timely way. The headteacher confidently challenges other services if she is concerned that pupils and their families are not getting the support they need.
- Pupils say they feel safe and describe what they have learned to help keep them safe, particularly online. Leaders and the trust have made sure a very effective filtering system is on the school's network, and advice is given to parents about how to keep their children safe online at home.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Across different year groups and subjects, teaching is not consistently effective enough to ensure that all pupils make rapid progress. Work seen in some pupils' books shows that pupils are not always challenged to move on from work they can easily do, particularly the most able. This slows their progress towards the higher standards. Leaders are aware of this and are working with staff to tackle it.
- Pupils are sometimes given work that is too hard, so their concentration diminishes or they use resources inappropriately. Sometimes, teachers do not check the results of some pupils' work before they tidy away. When this happens, teachers do not know if these pupils have misunderstood the task. This risks pupils developing misconceptions rather than getting the 'right idea'.
- Occasionally, teachers' poor use of spoken and written standard English slows pupils' development of good speaking, spelling and writing skills. Similarly, some staff do not insist that pupils use the correct mathematical terms, for example accepting 'tin can' instead of 'cylinder'.
- A few teaching assistants are not clear enough about how they should support pupils' learning. Consequently, some pupils get too much support and others not enough guidance to meet the learning objectives, so they lose interest. Leaders have identified the need to clarify the role of teaching assistants and further training opportunities are in place to improve matters. Nevertheless, many teaching assistants are skilled in supporting pupils' learning, particularly in the early years classes and those who are supporting pupils' language development.
- New approaches to teaching reading in key stage 2 were introduced in September 2016, as a result of leaders' understandable disappointment in the progress of Year 6 pupils in summer 2016. Actions taken to improve are making their mark. Current pupils are making stronger progress across the school. For example in Years 3 and 6, pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, are making strong progress.
- Since the last inspection, improvements in the teaching of phonics, starting with the

two-year-old children, have led to a year-on-year increase in the number of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, achieving the expected standard at the end of Year 1.

- Some highly effective teaching, across different year groups and subjects, is leading to the stronger progress some pupils make – for example, the good progress seen in disadvantaged pupils’ reading and writing skills in Years 3 and 6 and the better progress pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make in mathematics, particularly in Year 1.
- The impact of leaders’ development work on teachers’ questioning skills and guidance to pupils is apparent in lessons and pupils’ workbooks. Skilful questioning and consistent written feedback, backed up by pupils being given time to revisit and improve their work, are effective. Similarly, daily short bursts of handwriting practice, geared to each pupil’s specific needs, lead to improved handwriting. The resultant pride that pupils take in their work is evident in neat presentation and the care of their books.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school’s work to promote pupils’ personal development and welfare requires improvement. A few pupils’ boisterous behaviour and unkind words during playtimes and when moving around school understandably worry a small number of pupils.
- Records show that leaders work effectively with individual pupils to help them overcome their concerns and deal with the pupils who have caused the problem. The majority of pupils spoken to during the inspection confirmed this. However, there are a few discrepancies in how incidents between pupils are recorded and how staff discuss these concerns with parents. Consequently, not all pupils or parents are confident about how well incidents between pupils are always managed.
- In all other respects, leaders and staff make effective provision for pupils’ personal development and welfare. There are a good range of opportunities for pupils to have responsibility and to speak out for themselves and each other. For example, Year 5 pupils help at lunchtime and clearly gain from the responsibility to support younger pupils. Skilled readers from Year 6 are trained to listen to younger pupils read. This builds their confidence as well as making them good role models to younger pupils.
- Personal development is highly effective in the early years. At the nose-wiping station, staff use symbols, sign language and words to help children to learn to blow their nose and wash their hands. Staff also provide training for parents to help establish good sleeping and eating habits at home.
- Pupils learn well to respect and understand the differences and similarities of people from other faiths and those from different family groups. A few pupils indicated a limited awareness of gender issues but the majority were confident that any teasing would be dealt with, and that they learn to respect and understand all as individuals.
- Leaders are highly effective at ensuring that welfare and safety concerns are

addressed. Risk assessments are thorough both for the premises and for individual pupils when needed. For example, leaders quickly and effectively responded to a concern about a breach in the outer perimeter fence, even though they were rightly confident that the inner perimeter fence was secure.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Attendance has improved year on year since the last inspection. However, it remains below the level of attendance in most primary schools and the rate of improvement is not consistent. Equally, the number of pupils who are regularly absent and/or late has reduced but still lags behind that found nationally. Leaders are diligent in working with parents to help them understand the importance of regular school attendance and punctuality, particularly for those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or who are disadvantaged. Leaders also work with the parents of the youngest children to instil good attendance habits from the very start of their children's school careers.
- Pupils generally behave well in lessons, are attentive and want to do well. Sometimes, a few pupils switch off or get distracted when teaching does not capture their interest. Leaders are in the process of refreshing their guidance to teachers about managing pupils' behaviour in lessons but it is too early to know if the new approach will be effective.
- Leaders have reduced their use of fixed-term exclusions effectively by increasing the number of staff supporting pupils who have social, emotional and mental health needs, and by providing additional training for all staff. The development of the 'seedlings' nurture room provides a daily opportunity for pupils who face the most complex challenges to be supported during difficult times. This strategy is proving effective.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Over the three years leading up to 2015, overall, pupils made increasingly strong progress and achieved increasingly higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics. However, 2016 Year 6 national test results were disappointing. The gap between Meynell pupils and pupils in other schools opened up again and very few pupils reached the higher standards. This was despite pupils making above-average progress in writing.
- Different groups of pupils made slower progress than other pupils in some subjects. For example, boys did much better in science than girls by the end of key stage 2. The large group of middle-ability disadvantaged pupils made less progress in reading and mathematics than other pupils in other schools.
- Leaders have taken robust action to tackle the weaknesses and disappointing 2016 outcomes. Currently, Year 6 pupils are making stronger progress, although not enough of the most able pupils are on track to reach the highest standards. In a range of different subjects, inconsistencies in teaching lead to inconsistencies in the progress pupils make.
- However, from arriving at school with skills and abilities below those typically found, children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress from these low

starting points. Year on year, an increasing proportion are reaching the level of development expected for their age. Equally, over the last three years, an increasing proportion of pupils in Year 1 have reached the expected standard in their phonics skills. Both these groups of pupils are on track to continue this improving trend.

- In 2016, a good proportion of lower- and middle-ability Year 2 pupils, including disadvantaged pupils effectively supported by the use of pupil premium, reached the expected standards in writing and mathematics. Differences in the progress of current key stage 1 pupils are a consequence of inconsistencies in teaching, as they are for the older pupils.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities across the school are making sound progress, particularly in their personal development. This year, these pupils in most year groups are making strong progress, particularly Years 1 and 6 pupils in mathematics and Years 5 and 6 pupils in reading.
- Staff work effectively to support the pupils' transition into school from other settings or home. Children who join the school as two-year-olds are making rapid progress, particularly in their listening and communication skills. Their good progress continues across the early years so that an increasing proportion are ready for the rigours of key stage 1.
- Year 6 pupils are well prepared for their move to secondary school as a result of their improving progress and visits to their chosen school, and because they have had a wide range of learning experiences across different subjects.

Early years provision

Good

- Highly effective leadership has ensured that the early years provision, which required significant improvement at the time of the last inspection, is now good. The trust's investment in resources and facilities, combined with the targeted training and support for staff, ensures that children are well taught and make good progress.
- Children start school with skills and abilities that are below those typical for their age, particularly in communication and language. Children and their families are well supported when children start their education. This helps children to settle quickly into school routines. Consequently, children in the Nursery and the Reception classes get off to a good start in their education.
- Teaching is good and adults provide a wide range of interesting opportunities to build on children's own experiences and interests both inside and outside. For example, children enjoy finding out about the taste, texture and smell of different fruits and vegetables while learning how to cut them up safely. They thoroughly enjoy their 'daily run', when they show a real sense of fun and good physical development as they run quickly, finding space and avoiding each other and obstacles.
- As a result of consistently effective teaching, over half the children reach a good level of development in reading, writing and mathematics. This demonstrates good progress

from their typically low starting points. Children make particularly good progress in their understanding, speech and in the way they manage their feelings, share and take turns.

- Children are safe and well cared for. Robust systems are in place to ensure that welfare requirements are met and safeguarding is effective. Relationships between adults and children and with their families are strong and, as a result, children feel secure and gain in confidence.
- The same level of diligence is applied to the two-year-old children. Staff are very aware of the different needs of the younger children. For example, children showed great delight in playing hide and seek with adults in the outdoor area. Adults skilfully supported children to develop their language in a game that lasted for a sustained period, children happily laughing and giggling throughout.
- The early years leader has a deep understanding of the needs of young children, especially those who are disadvantaged. She regularly monitors the provision and so has a good understanding of what is working well and when staff may need additional development opportunities. As in other areas of school, leaders do not always evaluate the impact of the different activities. This means they do not always know what is working really well and what is less effective.

School details

Unique reference number	139336
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10031955

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	2–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	503
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Julie Burkinshaw
Headteacher	Vikki Garratt
Executive headteacher	Angela Lant
Telephone number	0114 231 1425
Website	www.meynell.sheffield.sch.uk
Email address	headteacher@meynell.sheffield.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19–20 March 2015

Information about this school

- Meynell is a large primary school and includes part-time provision for two- to four-year old children in a purpose-built nursery on a site adjacent to the main school building.
- Nearly two thirds of pupils are disadvantaged and just over a fifth of pupils receive support for their special educational needs and/or disabilities. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds, with a small number of pupils from a wide range of other ethnic groups.
- The school is a sponsored academy within the Tipton School Academy Trust.
- The school occasionally makes use of an alternative provider, Whirlow Farm. At the time of the inspection, the number of pupils placed, part time, at the provider was very small.
- The school meets the Department for Education’s current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils’ progress and attainment.

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website and complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited every class, at least once, for varying amounts of time. Several joint visits were undertaken with senior leaders. During the visits, inspectors spoke with pupils, listened to them read and reviewed the work in their books. An inspector visited the 'seedlings' nurture room and observed a key stage 2 assembly.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils at breaktimes and met with the school council and a group of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils were observed as they moved around the school between lessons and at lunchtime. A sample of pupils' books and work covering all subjects was reviewed.
- Inspectors considered the views of 127 parents who responded to Parent View and eight written responses to the same survey. Inspectors also talked with parents as they brought their children to school.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, including the executive headteacher representing the trust, newly qualified teachers and teachers responsible for leading subjects. A meeting was held with the governing body and a telephone discussion with a representative from Learn Sheffield, a school improvement service commissioned by the local authority.
- A wide range of documents and records were considered, including those relating to the safety and welfare of pupils, assessment and progress information, and leaders' records of their evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching.

Inspection team

Susan Hayter, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lesley Bowyer	Ofsted Inspector
Julia Wright	Ofsted Inspector

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