

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



20 July 2017

Jane Oborn
Headteacher
Medstead Church of England Primary School
Roedowns Road
Medstead
Alton
Hampshire
GU34 5LG

Dear Ms Oborn

Short inspection of Medstead Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 27 June 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in February 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Since joining the school in 2014, you have provided dedicated leadership and, together with governors, developed a highly inclusive school. Staff provide good care and support to pupils. The specialist provision for deaf children is a strong feature of the school, because the deaf pupils are integrated well into the main school. All pupils benefit from working closely with each other. For example, mainstream pupils have the opportunity to learn sign language so that they improve their communication skills with deaf pupils.

Leaders and governors have taken effective action to address the areas for development identified at the time of the last inspection. These areas were to improve teaching further and provide more opportunities for pupils to practise writing skills across the curriculum. While there have been a number of changes in teaching staff since the last inspection, teaching has remained good. Some parents raised concerns about the high turnover of teachers recently. Nevertheless, through robust performance management and supportive training opportunities, teachers, including new members of staff, have honed their skills, and teaching meets pupils' needs well. Leaders recognise the need to communicate with parents more effectively, so that these concerns are alleviated.

Leaders have developed a varied and rich curriculum in which the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are balanced well by topic-based cross-curricular learning. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the many trips and visits that enrich their learning. For example, pupils eagerly explained how a trip to a themed museum helped them learn about the Second World War. Pupils report that the trips provide inspiration for art, drama performances and writing. For example, pupils said, 'we are able to understand better', and, 'we used powerful adjectives in our writing after our trip'. These experiences also support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Leaders' evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses is accurate. A recent dip in standards at key stage 2 in 2016 was largely due to slow progress in mathematics. Leaders have recognised this and put effective actions in place to rectify the decline. Consequently, standards in mathematics are rising rapidly and the school's information shows that the current pupils in Year 6 are back on track to achieve what they should. However, the most able pupils are not consistently challenged to attempt more difficult work. Leaders have ensured that challenging work is available and are now working to make sure that pupils are encouraged to try it. Achievement at key stage 1 has been above average over a number of years. However, leaders have identified that some current key stage 1 pupils have not made as much progress as they should have in the first half of this academic year. Leaders have now taken effective action to accelerate progress for these pupils.

The proportion of children gaining a good level of development in the early years is above average. Children enjoy stimulating activities in a well-resourced, safe learning environment. They learn together, developing good social skills, and their achievements are documented well. Teachers and teaching assistants know their children well.

Pupils are proud of their school. They are extremely polite and show consideration for others. They take turns to speak and have good listening skills. Pupils are keen learners. Leaders ensure that pupils feel valued.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are monitored effectively. Checks on adults' suitability to work with children are meticulous.

Leaders have established a strong, open culture of safeguarding that permeates the school. Staff have regular training so that they are knowledgeable about procedures to keep their pupils safe. For example, they have all received training on keeping pupils safe from the risks of extremism.

The school's records show that concerns are rigorously followed up. Regular meetings take place between key personnel in the school to review how well vulnerable pupils are doing and if there are any further ways they can be supported.

Pupils are well supported in understanding how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils are knowledgeable about road safety and keeping safe online. Pupils report that while there is a small amount of bullying behaviour, it is dealt with sensitively and effectively by staff.

Inspection findings

- The focus of this inspection was to investigate specific areas of the school's provision, including: the effectiveness of teaching; progress of pupils in mathematics; provision for pupils' writing; progress of disadvantaged pupils; and the attendance of pupils.
- Teaching is typically good. Leaders provide high-quality training for all teachers and good support for those who are more recently qualified. Teachers strive to make their teaching inspiring and they work hard to ensure that pupils who fall behind catch up quickly. However, some teaching does not routinely challenge the most able pupils sufficiently. These pupils are not always encouraged to tackle more difficult and challenging work, despite it being available.
- Pupils appreciate the feedback, both verbal and written, provided by their teachers. Pupils report that they find this feedback helpful; they say that it helps them to get better at their work. However, some explain that they would like more time to consider and act upon their teacher's advice so that they can make more improvements to their work.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics. Leaders have improved mathematics teaching by allowing pupils to discuss their reasons and apply their knowledge in order to solve problems. Pupils also use mathematical equipment to help them with their understanding. Boys and girls engage well in mathematics and now make good progress.
- Teachers provide plentiful opportunities for pupils to write for a variety of purposes in English and other subjects, such as science. Pupils' writing skills are developing well and they edit and improve their own work successfully. For example, pupils check spellings and the meanings of words for themselves. Pupils like the displays in classrooms and corridors that celebrate their writing achievements. Pupils of all abilities are making good progress in their writing.
- Leaders and teachers rigorously analyse individual pupil performance to find out how well pupils are doing. Governors ensure that leaders are held to account for the progress of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. The few pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds in the school are known and supported exceptionally well. As a result, disadvantaged pupils' progress is accelerating towards that of other pupils nationally.
- Leaders monitor the attendance of pupils closely, and most pupils rarely miss a day at school. Overall attendance rates have improved this year. The few pupils who have less regular attendance are provided with effective support.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the most able pupils are routinely challenged in lessons, so that they make more rapid progress
- communication is improved, so that parents' concerns about staff turnover are alleviated.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Winchester, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Hampshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Susan Child
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

- Meetings were held with the headteacher, assistant headteacher, middle leaders, including the leader of specialist provision, and the special educational needs coordinator. I also considered 29 responses from staff to the online questionnaire.
- I met with the chair of governors and held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- I considered 97 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and a further 66 written responses from parents.
- I observed teaching and learning across the year groups. All observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher or assistant headteacher.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work across year groups and subjects was carried out during learning walks. Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, and 59 online questionnaire responses from pupils were taken into account.
- I looked at a number of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school's plans for improvement, and analysis of the school's performance data. Information relating to the attendance of pupils, safeguarding and child protection records, external reports, and minutes from governor meetings were also scrutinised.