

# The Meadow Community Primary School

Meadow Way, Wigston Magna, Wigston, Leicestershire LE18 3QZ

## Inspection dates

28–29 November 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not sustained the outstanding quality of education since the last inspection. Standards have declined in a number of subjects.
- Leaders' analysis of the school's current performance is not accurate. In particular, their evaluations of the quality of teaching and of pupils' attainment and progress are too optimistic.
- The trust and governing body have not held leaders to account for the decline in the school's performance. The governing body is now challenging leaders about how to bring about improvement.
- The quality of teaching and learning in key stages 1 and 2 is not consistently good. Teachers often set work that is not matched well with pupils' abilities.
- Standards at the end of key stage 1 have steadily declined since the last inspection. The published figures for reading, writing and mathematics in 2016 were well below national figures.
- Leaders did not prepare well enough for the school's first group of pupils in Year 6 in 2017. As a result, pupils' rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics were well below average.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not achieve well. At the end of key stage 1, no disadvantaged pupil has attained at greater depth in reading, writing or mathematics for the past two years.
- At the end of key stage 2, in 2017, the rates of progress for disadvantaged pupils were well below average in all three subjects.

### The school has the following strengths

- The teaching of phonics is strong. Consequently, the majority of pupils typically reach the required standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and at breaktimes. They are keen learners and are proud of their school.
- Leadership and teaching in the early years are good. As a result, children settle quickly. An increasing number are well prepared for Year 1 by the end of the Reception Year.
- The governing body has ensured that the school's safeguarding arrangements are effective. Pupils feel safe at school.

## Full report

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

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management to bring about rapid improvement by ensuring that:
  - leaders and governors evaluate the school’s overall performance accurately
  - those responsible for governance put in place clear plans to improve the effectiveness of the school
  - leaders check that the new arrangements for supporting disadvantaged pupils are leading to these pupils making faster progress and reaching higher standards
  - leaders make better use of information about the attainment and progress of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities in their evaluation of the effectiveness of the school’s support for them.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils make faster progress and learn in greater depth by making sure that teachers:
  - consistently set challenging work that is matched to pupils’ abilities, including in the early years and for the most able pupils
  - use questioning skills more extensively to deepen pupils’ understanding
  - place greater emphasis on promoting problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics
  - learn rapidly from effective practice with colleagues so that the quality of teaching is consistently good throughout the school.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Leaders' evaluations of the school's performance are too generous. They particularly overestimate pupils' attainment and progress, and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Leaders' monitoring records show contradictions between their generous judgements of teaching and the number of areas that they stated were in need of improvement.
- Between 2013 and 2015, standards at the end of key stage 1 have declined. Despite recognising the problem, leaders and the governing body did not take remedial action that was fully effective and key stage 1 standards were again low in 2016.
- Leaders' planning for the incorporation of classes of pupils in Year 6 from September 2016 was not effective. The school's internal assessment system at that time was not fit for purpose. As a result, too few pupils made the progress of which they were capable.
- Leaders do not currently have a precise overview of the achievement of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, taken as a group. As a result, leaders' information about this group of vulnerable pupils is incomplete.
- In September 2017, a new post of pupil premium coordinator was created. This leader has a clear vision for how she will raise standards for disadvantaged pupils. She has already begun to put plans in place to bring about improvement. It is, however, too soon to see the impact of her work on the progress of disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders have good systems in place to ensure that newly appointed teachers are quickly inducted in to the school's routines. All staff receive regular safeguarding training. Teachers speak positively about the training and professional development that they receive.
- Leaders have made sure that an interesting and varied curriculum is available for pupils, studied through topics such as Tudors and Vikings. Pupils said they enjoy the associated trips and workshops provided to enrich the curriculum. Pupils also speak positively about the very wide range of extra-curricular activities available to them, such as drama, Zumba, gymnastics, craft, film and chess. As a result, pupils develop a wide range of skills and interests.
- Leaders' work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is strong. During a thought-provoking assembly, pupils in Year 6 spoke with confidence about what they had learned about slavery during the recent Black History Week. These pupils skilfully led the rest of the school into a time for others to reflect on the theme. Pupils spoke confidently about their awareness of democracy. They are quickly becoming well-rounded individuals who are prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders use the additional funding provided through the primary physical education and sport premium effectively. As a result, pupils have access to a range of sporting activities. Pupils show a good understanding of how to keep themselves fit and healthy.

## Governance of the school

- Since it took on the governance of the school, the trust has recognised that standards have declined but has had little impact on raising them. It is now beginning to plan its support for the school to bring about the improvements that are needed.
- The local governing body is very clear about some of its roles and responsibilities in relation to the school. For example, governors carry out a thorough, annual, safeguarding visit. As a result of this careful work, they have made sure that the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe meet requirements.
- The local governing body, however, has not been tenacious enough in holding leaders to account for the decline in standards. Governors are now challenging leaders more thoroughly and are beginning to ensure that staff performance management targets support key improvement areas.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have made sure that all of the necessary checks and training are in place, in line with statutory requirements.
- Pupils and parents say that the school is safe. Pupils express confidence in adults' ability to keep them safe and sort out any issues that may arise particularly in regard to staying safe online.
- Leaders' work with vulnerable pupils and families is a strength of the school. Leaders and staff are rightly proud of the level of care and support that they provide for pupils who have additional social and emotional needs. School staff work effectively with parents and other agencies to make sure that they deal with any concerns quickly and decisively. They focus on improving pupils' safety and personal circumstances. For example, the school offers a free breakfast club and nurture programme for disadvantaged pupils.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- Teachers do not consistently set work that is well matched to pupils' abilities. This means that pupils do not use their time in lessons to best effect. As a result, the quality of teaching across the school is not consistently good.
- In some lessons, the most able pupils make slow progress because they are asked to carry out a series of easy tasks before they reach the more challenging work they are capable of tackling. This puts a ceiling on what they can achieve. In other cases, less-able pupils struggle to complete work which is too hard for them.
- In mathematics, teachers do not promote the use of problem-solving and reasoning skills consistently well in all classes. This means that less-able pupils do not always know how to find answers to mathematical problems. Teachers do not consistently use questioning skills effectively to challenge pupils' thinking. Consequently, pupils are not always clear about how to complete or improve their work.
- Teaching often does not help pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding beyond the basic level. This means that many pupils in key stages 1 and 2 do not make the strong and rapid progress that they should to achieve higher standards and greater

depth.

- Some teaching is effective and enables pupils to make good progress. In key stages 1 and 2, however, teachers have not used this effective practice to raise the standard of the weaker teaching in the school sufficiently.
- Pupils read well. They use their knowledge of phonics to read unfamiliar words with confidence.
- In mathematics in key stage 2, most pupils have a secure knowledge of basic arithmetic and multiplication facts. As a result, most pupils are working at the standard expected for their age.
- Parents speak positively about the homework set for their children. Parents who spoke with the inspectors also say that they are pleased with the communication they receive from the school about their children's progress.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. In their lessons, pupils cooperate well and support each other in their learning. This works most effectively when teachers use mixed-ability pairings to ensure that less-able pupils keep up a good pace of learning.
- Pupils speak with warm appreciation about the support that they receive from the school. In particular, they value the 'morning clubs' and the fact that there are trusted adults who will listen and help if anyone is 'going through a lot' at home or is 'feeling down' for any reason.
- Many displays around the school celebrate pupils' learning about equalities and respect for a range of faiths and cultures.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They conduct themselves well around school and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They come to their lessons ready and willing to learn. They settle to the task in hand quickly and without fuss.
- The school's records of behaviour incidents show that the occasional instances of poor behaviour are dealt with quickly and thoroughly. In particular, records show that staff react decisively in any instances of pupils using derogatory language or swearing.
- Pupils say they feel safe at the school and they are especially clear about how to stay safe online. They show a good awareness of what constitutes bullying and say there is no bullying or prejudice at the school.
- Attendance is above average. The level of persistent absence for disadvantaged pupils decreased in 2017 and is now closer to the national figure.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Requires improvement**

- Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 do not make consistently strong progress. This inconsistency is evident in the work in pupils' books across a range of subjects, including English and mathematics. There is little evidence of the most able pupils deepening their understanding and making sustained progress and reaching the high standards of which they are capable.
- Standards at the end of key stage 1 have declined since the last inspection. In 2016, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was well below average. In 2017, the proportion of pupils at the end of key stage 1 attaining at the expected standard and at greater depth in all three subjects improved to be just below the national average.
- At the end of key stage 2, pupils' rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics were well below the national averages in 2017. This was the school's first group of pupils in Year 6. Not enough pupils made the progress of which they were capable during their time in key stage 2. In 2017, pupils' attainment in mathematics at the end of key stage 2 was just above the national average.
- In 2017, disadvantaged pupils made slower progress by the end of key stage 2 than other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Likewise, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in key stage 1 has been well below national figures in all three subjects for the past two years. During that time, no disadvantaged pupil has attained at greater depth in reading, writing or mathematics.
- As a consequence of good teaching of phonics, a large majority of pupils consistently achieve the required standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- Leadership and teaching in the early years are good, including in the pre-school. The early years leader has a clear understanding of the children's needs and has identified writing and language as key areas for development.
- Children enter the early years at a level of development which is below that typical for their age, particularly in speech and language, and in writing. In all other respects, children show skills which are typical for their age. As a result of consistently good teaching, standards improved considerably in 2017. The proportion of children who achieved a good level of development by the end of the year is now closer to national figures than in previous years.
- Staff provide a well-planned range of activities, both indoors and outdoors. Through these activities, children develop their social and communication skills very well.
- Staff take particular care to provide an appropriate degree of nurture and care for the children in the pre-school who are still just two years of age. As a result, children settle quickly and are confident learners.
- The early years area is spacious and well resourced. There is a pleasing atmosphere of harmony and purpose across the indoor and outdoor spaces. Children make good choices when selecting from the wide range of activities available to them. Adults interact with children very effectively and take many opportunities to promote good relationships and effective communications. As a result, children quickly gain a wide

range of positive social and learning skills.

- Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress through the weekly newsletter, homework books and the helpful 'wow' slips children take home to celebrate particular achievements. Parents speak highly of the early years education that their children receive.
- Good care and support are provided for children who have SEN and/or disabilities. As a result, they make appropriate, small steps of progress.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective and statutory requirements are met. Staff have received the appropriate training and the indoor and outdoor areas are safe and secure. Staff provide comfort, support and encouragement, showing a good regard for children's well-being.
- The most able children make a smooth transition from pre-school to the Reception classes and they are ready to write at greater length. They do not receive sufficient challenge from staff, however, to enable them to make the rapid progress of which they are capable. Sometimes bad habits, such as incorrect pencil grips and the formation of numbers and letters, go uncorrected.

## School details

Unique reference number	138173
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10037183

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	412
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Bill Gilmour
Headteacher	Kathryn McGovern
Telephone number	0116 288 7227
Website	<a href="http://www.meadowcommunity.co.uk">www.meadowcommunity.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@meadowcommunity.leics.sch.uk">office@meadowcommunity.leics.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	18–19 April 2013

## Information about this school

- The Meadow Community Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school has undergone a period of significant change over the past two years. In 2016, the school joined the newly formed Symphony Learning Trust, of which the headteacher is chief executive officer. At the same time, the school expanded to include pupils in Year 6 for the first time, in common with other schools in the area. Prior to 2016, pupils left the school at the end of Year 5.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average.



- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 22 lessons, some jointly with senior leaders, across all classes. They looked at work in pupils' books covering a range of subjects, abilities and year groups.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the senior leadership team, and leaders with responsibility for early years, English, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. They also met with other teachers and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with members of the local governing body, including its chair, and the chair of the Symphony Learning Trust's board of trustees.
- Inspectors met with a group of pupils and also spoke informally with pupils during lessons, lunchtimes and breaktimes.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start of the school day. The lead inspector also considered 44 responses from Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of documentation, including the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation summary, minutes of meetings of the governing body, the school's current information on pupils' attainment and progress, attendance records, external reports on the work of the school, monitoring and evaluation records and a range of documents relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Christine Watkins, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Caroline Oliver	Ofsted Inspector
Lindsay Hall	Ofsted Inspector
Karen Lewis	Ofsted Inspector
Pete Strauss	Ofsted Inspector

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