

# Meadstead Primary Academy

Meadstead Drive, Royston, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S71 4JS

## Inspection dates

22 to 23 January 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
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	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is variable. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high.
- Learning tasks do not build sufficiently on pupils' prior knowledge and skills and, therefore, pupils' progress is uneven.
- There is marked variability in the ability of middle leaders to evaluate their areas of responsibility. They are therefore not able to effectively influence the quality of teaching in their subjects.
- Some pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, do not make enough progress at key stage 2 in reading and writing.
- Pupils do not routinely follow up and rectify errors in spelling and punctuation. These weaknesses remain over time.
- Strategies for improving the teaching of writing across the school are not secure, especially at key stage 2.
- The most able pupils do not attain the high standards of which they are capable. The proportion of pupils who exceed expected standards in all subjects at both key stage 1 and key stage 2 is below average.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leaders' actions are leading to improving teaching in the early years and key stage 1, where children and pupils are beginning to make better progress.
- Parents have a positive view of the school and have confidence in the leadership. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend well. Pupils are respectful, kind and considerate.
- Pastoral care is promoted very successfully. Leaders ensure that the emotional needs and well-being of pupils are addressed as a priority.
- The Communication and Interaction Resourced Provision (CIRP) is well led. Pupils receive good care and education to assist them in making appropriate progress towards their targets.
- Governors are skilled professionals. They offer support and challenge to school leaders. They are clear about some of the improvements that still need to be made.
- Children in the early years receive a good quality education. They enjoy school and look forward to the activities that are on offer.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils' progress increases, particularly in writing, and that a greater proportion of pupils exceed the expected standards at the end of key stages 1 and 2, by ensuring that:
  - pupils routinely identify and correct spelling and punctuation errors in written work, across a range of subjects
  - teachers set consistently high expectations of pupils and provide work that has an appropriate level of challenge
  - teachers plan and implement clear sequences of learning that build on pupils' prior knowledge and skills, particularly in English.
- Further improve the effectiveness of middle leaders by:
  - providing training that enables them to effectively evaluate the effect of their actions on the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes
  - enabling the best middle leaders to share their practice with others.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Some pupils have not made as much progress as they could have over the last two years. Leaders are working assiduously to address variation in the quality of teaching. Their actions are securing demonstrable improvement in pupils' progress in the early years and key stage 1, but improvements are less developed at key stage 2.
- The headteacher knows and understands the pupils and the community very well. She has formed many positive relationships with parents and external agencies. The school has become increasingly popular and is oversubscribed due to its positive reputation.
- The headteacher leads by example and has high expectations of her staff. Staff appreciate the support and challenge that they receive from the leadership team that is beginning to improve the quality of teaching. Staff are highly supportive of leaders and work together well to support the pupils and each other. Staff say, 'We are a really good team, a family. We work closely together.' The headteacher supports pupils and their parents well. She ensures that they are at the forefront of decisions, reinforcing the ethos of the school.
- Leaders have managed significant and recent improvements to the school building and environment well. Disruption has been kept to a minimum and both staff and pupils are now seeing the rewards. Pupils learn in clear, bright and cheerful environments. New areas to support intervention groups are available and staff use them well.
- The headteacher and senior leaders carry out regular visits to classrooms, where they check workbooks and the quality of teaching across the school. This overview helps them to understand where teaching is strong or where there may be areas of concern. Closer monitoring is helping to bring about more consistency.
- Leadership of the CIRP is strong. All pupils in the CIRP have an education, health and care plan (EHCP). Leaders of the CIRP are clear and knowledgeable about the individual needs of each pupil. Pupils make good progress toward their EHCP targets.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is highly knowledgeable and fully understands her responsibilities to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). She provides appropriate levels of support and advice to staff and parents to ensure the needs of each pupil with SEND are met.
- The quality of middle leadership is more variable. Some leaders, as in mathematics, are highly knowledgeable and provide clear guidance to colleagues. These leaders fully understand the demands of their role and are improving pupils' progress in these subjects. However, other middle leaders are less confident about their role in increasing pupils' progress and raising standards. Senior leaders are working to improve the quality of middle leadership.
- Staff involve pupils in a wide range of enrichment activities which they would otherwise not experience. These include daily before- and after-school activities, residential opportunities and visits out of school that have included London, the church and the cinema.
- Leaders use the sport premium to increase the range of activities on offer to pupils,

both during and after school. Activities include swimming, lawn bowling, skittles, cricket, basketball and netball. A physical education (PE) specialist teaches many of the PE lessons during the school day. Participation in sports activities has increased this academic year, particularly in after-school sports clubs.

- Leaders use the pupil premium funding to enhance and enrich the learning experiences of pupils. This results in an improvement in social and emotional interactions and develops pupils' communication skills.
- Pupils at Meadstead Primary Academy are prepared well for life in modern Britain due to the effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural development curriculum.

## **Governance of the school**

- Since the last inspection, there have been substantial changes to the governing body. New members have been appointed, based on the suitability of their knowledge and expertise.
- Local governing body minutes show that governors consistently hold leaders to account. They ask strategic questions which provide a supportive challenge to leaders in further developing the school.
- Governors have a good understanding of the strengths of the school. They are sympathetic to the difficulties the school has faced with staffing and redevelopment. They are highly supportive of the headteacher and the work she carries out. They correctly identify areas for development but have an overly optimistic view of the progress made by pupils, particularly in key stage 2.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that statutory recruitment checks are made on staff, governors and visitors to ensure that they are safe to work with pupils.
- Training is up to date and ensures that staff have a thorough understanding of the school's safeguarding processes and procedures. A culture of safeguarding spreads throughout the school. Staff understand their responsibility to ensure that pupils are safe and cared for. They follow routines and report any concerns they have, no matter how small, in a timely way. The school's designated safeguarding leaders are proactive in ensuring that safeguarding practice throughout the school is well understood and effective.
- Pupils feel safe at school, and responses by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, indicate their trust in the school to look after their children well.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

## **Requires improvement**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school is variable. Teachers do not consistently make sure that pupils' work is well matched to their needs and abilities. Learning does not consistently challenge pupils to make as much progress as they could.

- The teaching of phonics to younger pupils is effective. Adults model sounds clearly and encourage pupils to use their growing knowledge to attempt plausible spelling. There are frequent opportunities to read at school and pupils are also keen to take books home to share with families.
- Older pupils, though encouraged to read different texts, are less confident in using phonics skills to decode unfamiliar words. Too often their reading lacks fluency. They do not show enough awareness of punctuation and so reading tends to be mechanical and lacks expression.
- Teachers and support staff provide variable levels of support to pupils. Often this occurs during lessons and provides pupils with useful guidance on how to improve their work. However, this is not of the same quality in all classes.
- The teaching of writing is not well developed. Teaching methods lack cohesion and, consequently, pupils make limited progress. Key stage 2 workbooks show little progression throughout units of work. Spelling and the use of punctuation are weak. Pupils do not routinely follow up common word errors where these have been identified and so the same words are repeatedly misspelled, and the same punctuation mistakes are perpetuated.
- Pupils' handwriting and presentation are not consistently good across the school. This is because expectations are not high enough.
- Teaching, learning and assessment in mathematics is improving throughout the school. Pupils develop their knowledge and skills successfully through a well-developed programme of study and assessment. A high level of support for staff is available from the leader who exhibits very strong subject knowledge.
- Some teaching, particularly in the early years and at key stage 1, is engaging and enables pupils to become enthusiastic learners. Where teaching is effective, teachers plan carefully and consider the interests and needs of their pupils, which results in stronger progress.
- Some pupils from the CIRP and nurture group attend lessons with their peers. During these times they are well supported by staff. This enables them to successfully take part in a range of activities.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff provide pupils with a wide range of activities which develop pupils' understanding of staying safe. Pupils know who to speak to, both in and out of school, should they have any concerns. Pupils have a strong understanding about keeping safe on the internet and they are aware of the associated dangers. Pupils feel safe in the knowledge that they always have an adult to speak to should they need support.
- Pupils understand what bullying is. They know what to do if they encounter any situations that they consider involve bullying. They are confident that staff will sort out any concerns that they have.

- Pupils have a good understanding of a multicultural society. They demonstrate inclusive attitudes and are aware of the differences in people. One pupil said, 'We might not look the same or act the same, but we are still the same inside.'
- Pupils wear their uniform with pride. They enjoy the reward system in place and work hard to receive 'Bumbles' for their positive work and behaviour.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are welcoming, polite and respectful. They are well cared for and they are proud of their school. Most pupils are eager to learn and are enthusiastic about their lessons.
- Pupils walk calmly around school and listen carefully to instructions from adults. Pupils enjoy receiving praise for their positive behaviour.
- Staff in the CIRP and the nurture group respond well when pupils are having difficulty. Staff have a deep understanding of the needs of each child and deal with any inappropriate behaviour with sensitivity. Staff use identified strategies with calmness and patience that results in minimal disruption to other pupils' learning.
- Pupils' attendance is consistently high. Staff work closely with parents to ensure that pupils attend school. If absence becomes a concern, there are effective procedures in place to encourage a timely return to school.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- In 2018, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was in line with the national average. However, no pupils achieved the higher standard in these subjects combined. Progress over time in key stage 2 has been average.
- Last year, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils was below that of other pupils nationally for reading, writing and mathematics. No disadvantaged pupils achieved the higher standard. Disadvantaged pupils are not making enough progress from their starting points, particularly in writing, where their progress is significantly below the national average.
- In 2018, the attainment of pupils at the end of key stage 1 was just below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard was also below the national average, with no pupils exceeding the expected standard in writing.
- Progress for current key stage 2 pupils remains variable. This stems from the variability and inconsistency in the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Not enough pupils make the progress that they should from their different starting points. The lack of high expectations in lessons and the variability of work in pupils' books demonstrate uneven challenge. The most able pupils do not make the progress they should.
- In the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2018, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard was above the national average. This is an improvement on previous years and reflects the improvements leaders have made in the development

of phonics teaching across the early years and key stage 1.

- The school's new library is in its infancy due to the recent refurbishment. There is already a wide range of both fiction and non-fiction texts available to pupils, which contribute to their enjoyment of reading.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- Many pupils enter the early years with skills and abilities well below those seen typically, particularly in language and communication. Leaders and staff address this successfully and pupils make good, sustained progress during their time in the setting. The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development has improved over time and is now just above the national average.
- The early years leader is confident and knowledgeable about her role. She understands her responsibilities well and offers good support to her newly-formed team. She is clear about how to assess and monitor children's progress accurately and thus has a clear picture of strengths and areas on which to focus.
- There have been significant improvements made in the Nursery class. Children are now better prepared for the move to Reception and, consequently, subsequent progress has increased. The Nursery is calm and has an orderly atmosphere. Children are enthusiastic and keen to take part in their phonics sessions. Adults model sounds clearly with suitable actions and children respond positively.
- In the Reception class, the teaching of phonics is delivered well. Children enjoy these sessions and are eager learners. They are confident in reciting their letter sounds. Teachers reinforce the understanding of words by asking children to explain what the words mean. Further reinforcement of spelling occurs as staff rearrange letters and children put them in the correct order, then attempt to write them down. Most children do this successfully.
- The behaviour of children in the early years is positive. Children interact well with each other and socialise appropriately. Children are welcoming and friendly towards visitors. They are proud to show their work and can explain what they are doing. Positive relationships between staff and children give the children confidence to improve.
- The early years curriculum has been carefully developed to provide a wide range of activities and play which develop children's skills and increase their knowledge.
- Parental involvement is positive. Parents can use 'safe' technology to share photographs and videos of their children with staff. Staff invite parents into school to take part in learning workshops and open days and provide good communication.

## School details

Unique reference number	139132
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	10082021

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	223
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Jack Boyer
Headteacher	Nichola Smith
Telephone number	01226 722 153
Website	<a href="http://www.meadsteadprimaryacademy.org">www.meadsteadprimaryacademy.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:contactus@meadsteadprimaryacademy.org">contactus@meadsteadprimaryacademy.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	25 to 26 February 2015

## Information about this school

- Meadstead Primary Academy is a sponsored academy school. It is part of the Academies Enterprise Trust. The overarching responsibility for governance of the school lies with the Academies Enterprise Trust board of trustees. The board of trustees delegates some responsibilities for governance to a local governing body that is shared with another Academies Enterprise Trust primary academy.
- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- The school has a resourced provision for 12 pupils with communication and interaction difficulties. All pupils in the resourced provision have an education, health and care plan.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.
- A breakfast club is offered by the school.



- Since the last inspection, there have been several new members of staff, including the deputy headteacher.
- The current headteacher has been in post since January 2016, having previously been the deputy headteacher.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in lessons from Nursery to Year 6. Some of these visits were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors met formally with a group of pupils and spoke more informally with pupils at lunchtime, breaktime and around school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the SENCo and leaders with responsibility for English and mathematics, early years, the nurture group and the CIRP. Inspectors met members of staff with responsibility for disadvantaged pupils and the sports premium. Inspectors also met with teachers and teaching assistants.
- The lead inspector met with governors and a representative of the Academies Enterprise Trust.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a broad range of evidence, including the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan, information about attendance and behaviour and some school policies. The school's child protection and safeguarding procedures were also scrutinised.
- Inspectors looked at a range of pupils' books and considered information on current pupils' progress and attainment.
- Inspectors considered the 19 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including 10 free-text comments. The lead inspector also looked at 27 responses to the staff survey.

## Inspection team

Sara Roe, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Louise Greatrex

Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. [www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings](http://www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings).

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