

# Inspection of The Mead Community Primary School

Hackett Place, Hilperton, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 7GN

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Inspection dates: 12–13 November 2019

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Staff enrich pupils' learning well. Pupils become articulate, well-mannered and spirited. Pupils enjoy debating 'big issues', such as politics and climate change. They gain a strong appreciation of the arts, including music. Pupils enjoy wide-ranging sporting activities and clubs. Pupils show respect for people's faiths, feelings and values.

However, over time, pupils' academic achievements have dipped. Pupils experience a good-quality education, but it is no longer outstanding. Some older pupils have not achieved as well as they should. Leaders and teachers have now raised their expectations of what pupils are able to achieve. There is a strong 'can do' ethos. Current pupils work hard. Nevertheless, pupils do not gain detailed knowledge and skills in every subject. This prevents pupils from excelling academically.

Pupils are happy and safe. Bullying happens occasionally. Pupils are confident that staff provide them with help and support to sort it out. Everyone is accepted and nurtured here.

Pupils usually behave well. However, on occasions when the curriculum is not well matched to their abilities, pupils' concentration dips. The few pupils, who find it difficult to manage their own behaviour, get the right help and support.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Most parents and carers would recommend the school. However, parents recognise that the quality of education has slipped.

Leaders' actions are very evident in the improvements in reading and mathematics. However, at times, leaders, including the trust, have been side-tracked from improving the quality of education. Leaders were slow to respond to the changes to the national curriculum in 2014. Some improvement took longer than expected. Leaders are working persistently to ensure that any remaining weaknesses are put right quickly. Pupils' achievement is now improving. Consequently, the school's overall effectiveness has taken a turn for the better and is good.

The early years is a strength. The curriculum supports children in Nursery and Reception very well. Adults make precise assessments of what children can do and know. They make every interaction with children count. As a result, children deepen their knowledge successfully. Children are, therefore, well prepared for key stage 1.

Reading sits front and centre of the school's work. All adults focus sharply on getting pupils' reading right from the start. Pupils' reading books are well matched to the sounds that they know. Pupils get the right support to work through any struggles they have. As a result, pupils read with increasing fluency. This sets up pupils well for what comes next.

The reading curriculum in key stage 2 gives pupils a strong understanding of how to write to interest the reader. Whole-class reading books also provide pupils with further knowledge for their wider studies. Increasingly, pupils use ambitious vocabulary in their own writing. Many older pupils can use paragraphing and spell well. However, some pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, do not write with the complexity they should. These pupils do not have enough practice to get this right.

Leaders and teachers have done much work to think about what they teach and when in reading, mathematics, art, music, and physical education. However, the more recent work to ensure that pupils gain deep knowledge in all subjects is at an early stage. The quality of education is too superficial in a few subjects. So, in subjects such as history, and to a lesser extent science, pupils enter upper key stage 2 without the depth of knowledge they need. This hinders their ability to apply their thinking. Leaders are tackling this, but it is early days.

Overall, pupils behave well. However, when the curriculum is not demanding, or when teachers do not adapt their plans well enough, a few pupils can go off task. When this happens, teachers usually re-engage them quickly.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are doing well. Most teachers support pupils to meet their personalised targets effectively. Pupils say that the strategies they use help them to access the whole curriculum.

The few pupils who need extra help to regulate their behaviour get the right support. This ensures that pupils are ready to learn and can rejoin their regular lessons successfully.

The school provides high-quality pastoral support. Pupils respond well to artistic, musical and sporting opportunities. These fulfilling experiences, beyond the classroom, bolster pupils' experiences well. This helps pupils to become reflective, confident and well rounded.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff recruitment checks meet requirements. Staff training is up to date. Staff apply their training well to keep pupils safe. There is a strong culture of safeguarding to identify, help and support pupils at risk throughout the school, including in the Nursery. Leaders with responsibilities for safeguarding are proactive in their work to ensure that everything is being done to reduce pupils' risk of harm.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders need to ensure that the school's curriculum is ambitious in every subject. Teachers need to ensure that the right depth of knowledge is planned for and the

order of teaching ensures that pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, learn well across a wide range of subjects.

- Most teachers are productive in their application of the school's assessment systems and use them effectively to plan sequences of work well. However, a few teachers do not use their assessments to check pupils' understanding and develop pupils' knowledge sufficiently well. Leaders need to check more carefully how teachers are using their assessments to plan for pupils' onward learning.
- While many pupils learn to write well, too few pupils use and apply the more difficult grammatical features expected for their age. Pupils need to use and apply complex sentences to better effect. Leaders must also ensure that the content of lesson sequences provide pupils with sufficient time to practise and deepen their writing skills over time, particularly in lower key stage 2.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138133
<b>Local authority</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10111644
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	553
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Christian Checkley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Emma Holton
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.themead.wilts.sch.uk">www.themead.wilts.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25–26 February 2014

## Information about this school

- The school operates on two sites. Wingfield site has four mixed-age classes. The Hilperton site has two classes for each year group. There is a head who oversees both sites.
- Both sites operate Nursery provision. While the school's age range is 2 to 11, the school currently takes three-year-olds and four-year-olds into Nursery.
- The school is part of a small multi academy trust of three schools and a teaching school. There is an executive headteacher who oversees the work of all three schools. The executive headteacher is a national leader of education (NLE).
- There are several specialist leaders of education (SLE), who work across all schools in the trust.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

- The lead inspector held a meeting with the trustees of the multi-academy trust

who are responsible for school improvement. The lead inspector met with the chair of academy advisers, members of the local academy board and with the school's external adviser.

- We met with the executive headteacher, head of schools, and the extended leadership team. We also met with subject leaders and teachers new to the profession. We talked to a wide range of staff during the inspection.
- We checked that safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented effectively. We talked to pupils and staff about the culture of safeguarding in the school. We also reviewed pupils' exclusion, behaviour and attendance records.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science, history and art. This entailed discussions with subject leaders; visits to lessons; looking at examples of work; discussions with teachers; discussions with pupils; and listening to pupils read. We conducted these inspection activities across both school sites.
- We gathered the views of parents during the inspection. The lead inspector considered the 150 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. We gathered the views of pupils during both days of the inspection.
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### **Inspection team**

Julie Carrington, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sarah Foulkes	Ofsted Inspector
Teresa Hill	Ofsted Inspector
Wendy D'Arcy	Ofsted Inspector

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