

Inspection of The Meadows Primary School

Bristol Road South, Northfield, Birmingham, West Midlands B31 2SW

Inspection dates: 21–22 January 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Children in the early years get off to a good start. Leaders plan a curriculum that meets their needs well. By the end of key stage two, however, pupils do not do as well as they should in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders want pupils to do better. They are now taking positive action to improve the curriculum.

Pupils are well behaved, polite and friendly. The school's programme, 'Everyone welcome, everyone equal', teaches pupils about respect and tolerance. Pupils say, 'It is ok to be you.' They have a clear understanding of the school's behaviour system.

Pupils are safe and well cared for. They know that if they have a problem or worry, there is an adult who will help them. Pupils say that adults deal with bullying well, and we agree.

Pupils enjoy learning and work hard in lessons. They talk with confidence and enthusiasm about their learning. Some pupils attend extra-curricular activities such as drama, knitting and multi-sports. However, there are a limited number of clubs and available places. This means that not all pupils who would like to take part are able to.

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

Leaders are beginning to review their curriculum. They know that pupils do not make the progress that they should. Leaders want pupils to deepen their learning in the subjects that they study.

Leaders have improved their approach to the teaching of reading. Pupils read regularly. Teachers explore the context and meanings of words to broaden pupils' vocabulary. For example, in Year 5 pupils discussed why a poet likened a river to a 'nomad' and a 'tramp'. Pupils learn to summarise, retrieve information and work out what is happening from a piece of text.

In writing, pupils use adventurous vocabulary. They apply the language features they have been learning. Teachers plan together well. However, leaders do not check or have an overview of the quality of texts used. They have not established an overall plan of what should be taught in reading and writing, or when.

The teaching of phonics is well structured. Pupils revisit known sounds and are introduced to new ones. Pupils practise and build on their learning. Most books are matched to pupils' phonics ability. Teachers in Reception and Year 1 keep a close eye on how pupils are doing. They help them to catch up when they fall behind.

In mathematics, pupils use what they already know in problem-solving. They now have more opportunities to explain their reasoning in mathematical activities.

Leaders have developed a clear sequence of learning in geography. They have established and implemented some well-constructed plans. However, they have not checked how well these plans are working. Other subjects are less well planned and developed.

Pupils behave well because staff have high expectations. Staff establish clear routines and most pupils follow them well. Staff record behaviour and bullying incidents with rigour. The system that leaders currently use does not help them to identify different types or patterns of behaviour easily. This prevents them putting early support in place.

Leaders have trained pupils as 'peer mediators'. They help other pupils sort out problems at play time. They are proud of these roles and carry them out responsibly. Leaders are developing a curriculum that helps pupils to become responsible, respectful citizens. Pupils in key stage two discuss and debate sensitive issues with empathy and respect. However, pupils have limited opportunities to visit cultural places of interest. Pupils have little knowledge of influential people, such as artists, composers and scientists.

The school's resource base caters for pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties well. Parents speak highly of the effective support that their children receive. However, a small number of parents are less satisfied about the support that their children receive in the main school.

The number of pupils placed on the special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) register is high. Some have not been assessed accurately. Leaders recognise that they need to improve their identification of pupils with SEND. In classrooms, staff adapt the learning environment for these pupils. They plan additional support and adapt their teaching. Leaders, however, do not check that this is effective.

Leaders are now checking more carefully how well disadvantaged pupils are doing. The new assessment system is helping teachers to better identify gaps in pupils' learning. This means that they can now provide better support for disadvantaged pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained in a range of safeguarding issues pertinent to their community. Leaders keep staff updated on a regular basis at staff briefings. Staff are vigilant and keep a close eye on vulnerable pupils. Leaders take timely and appropriate action when staff raise concerns. They escalate concerns if necessary to ensure that pupils and families receive the support they need.

Pupils are taught about keeping safe. Leaders are currently planning a more structured approach to how aspects of safeguarding will be delivered through the curriculum.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Over time, progress and attainment has declined in reading, writing and mathematics. Since the last inspection, leaders have faced a number of challenges, including significant building work. This has affected leaders' focus on improving standards. Leaders are now addressing this decline. Year group leaders are beginning to monitor reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders should develop a more rigorous and whole-school approach to monitoring and evaluation.
- The revised curriculum is at an early stage of development. Currently, only curriculum plans in geography and history have been established. What leaders have developed so far is promising but not yet embedded. Planning in other subject areas is limited, including in reading and writing. Leaders should ensure that plans are created and developed in all subjects so that pupils build their skills and knowledge over time.
- Currently, leaders do not provide enough enrichment in the curriculum. Pupils have limited opportunities to develop their talents, interests and cultural knowledge. Leaders should ensure that curriculum plans provide opportunities for pupils to further enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The identification of pupils with SEND is not secure. Leaders should develop robust systems to accurately identify pupils with SEND. This will help all staff to make appropriate referrals to the SEND coordinator. Leaders should strategically plan and monitor interventions to ensure that they are appropriate and effective.
- Pastoral leaders record behaviour incidents meticulously. However, the current system does not provide as much meaningful information as it could. Leaders should analyse records more effectively. This will help them identify patterns and trends for a small number of pupils so that they can address them more easily.

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 are the school and you are 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

Unique reference number	103296
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10132950
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	611
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Claire Craddock
Headteacher	David Naughton
Website	www.meadowsprimary.org
Date of previous inspection	28–29 June 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, a new school has been built. The school moved into the new building in January 2019. Prior to this, some pupils were taught in temporary accommodation on the school site.
- The school has a resource base which caters for 26 pupils with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). Pupils with education, health and care plans are referred to the base by the local authority. Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes. Pupils integrate with some mainstream lessons where appropriate.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We observed staff listening to pupils read and observed phonics in early years and key stage 1.
- We visited all year groups, sometimes accompanied by school leaders.
- We met with the headteacher, the deputy headteachers, the early years leader and the subject leader for phonics. We met with the SEND coordinator, the assistant coordinator for SEND and the leader of the resource base to discuss the

provision for pupils with SEND and SLCN. We also met with leaders responsible for behaviour and attendance.

- We did deep dives in English, mathematics, music, physical education (PE) and geography. We met with subject leaders, visited lessons, looked at plans and talked to leaders, teachers and pupils. We also met with the subject leader for religious education (RE) and looked at curriculum plans.
- We checked the school's record and procedures for the safe recruitment of staff. We met with the deputy headteacher, who is a designated safeguarding leader, and other members of the pastoral support team to discuss safeguarding practice and check school records. We discussed safeguarding arrangements and practice with other staff and governors. We checked pupils' understanding of how to keep themselves safe and considered how safeguarding was taught through the curriculum.
- We met with three members of the governing body, including the acting chair and a representative of the local authority.
- We met with teaching staff, including newly qualified teachers, to discuss induction, workload and the support they receive.
- We observed pupils on the playground, in assembly and around school. We talked to pupils about their learning and experiences at The Meadows.
- We talked to parents before school. We considered the 37 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the 26 written comments. We also met with two parents. We considered the 33 responses to the staff questionnaire and the 41 responses to the pupils' questionnaire.
- The school website was checked. Consideration was given to a range of documentation provided by the school, including the school's development plan and self-evaluation, minutes of governing body meetings, school policies, curriculum plans and published data.

Inspection team

Sue Cameron, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Stuart Evans	Ofsted Inspector
Sue Parker	Ofsted Inspector
Jo Owen	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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