

Inspection of Watercliffe Meadow Community Primary School

Boynton Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S5 7HL

Inspection dates: 12–13 February 2020

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school life at Watercliffe Meadow. This is a friendly and inclusive school. Everyone receives a warm welcome, including visitors. Staff know and understand the needs of pupils extremely well. Relationships between pupils and adults are strong.

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils and want them to achieve their very best. Pupils gain good knowledge and skills across a wide range of subjects. They talk with confidence and excitement about what they have learned and what they can remember. The school's motto of 'The world is ours!' permeates every aspect of school life.

Pupils feel valued and listened to. They enjoy 'circle time' and 'working party circles', where they can share their views. They take up leadership responsibilities with enthusiasm. Leaders expect pupils to behave well and they do. Pupils understand and love 'golden time', when they can do something they enjoy. They say it encourages them to behave and work hard. Pupils told us that bullying is uncommon. They appreciate the 'magic room', where they can go to get extra support.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. One parent's comment echoed many others, when they said, 'This is an amazing school; it has helped my child not just academically but socially and emotionally.'

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

Leaders and staff are passionate and determined about providing the best quality of education for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result, pupils are well prepared for the next steps in their education.

Leaders have thought carefully about the curriculum. They have designed a creative topic-based curriculum that inspires pupils' curiosity. Different subjects are interconnected through themes linked to a 'big question'. This allows pupils to gain lots of knowledge and to develop a wide range of skills.

In the early years, children are safe and happy. There are clear routines which allow children to develop their independence. Teachers provide children with many interesting activities. They make sure that children get off to a good start in developing their reading and mathematical skills. During our visit, children were excitedly exploring shapes. They used complex vocabulary such as 'sphere'. Children are interested and love learning here.

Leaders have prioritised reading. The teaching of phonics is well organised and planned. Children learn to recognise sounds and blend them fluently so that they can read words. Pupils in key stage 1 learn to decode well and read simple texts. In 2019, pupils achieved well in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Children who fall behind in their reading receive extra support. This helps most of them to catch up quickly. However, a small but significant number of lower-attaining pupils do not catch up as quickly as they should. Most adults teach phonics effectively. Leaders are aware that some staff require additional training.

Pupils read often to adults at school and at home. Older pupils read longer and more challenging texts. Pupils develop a real love of reading. They spoke enthusiastically about their books and favourite authors.

In history, science and mathematics, leaders have planned what knowledge they want pupils to gain in a logical order. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They make the right decisions about what to teach and when. They revisit the crucial knowledge they want pupils to remember. Pupils revise, practise and apply their skills. In mathematics, pupils can explain how previous learning is helping them to do more complex work. In science and history, pupils are able to use subject-specific vocabulary confidently to explain what they have learned.

Pupils have many opportunities to take part in residential visits, performances at the local theatre, visit museums and attend sporting facilities. Leaders and teachers deliberately plan these opportunities to enhance pupils' learning and broaden their horizons. Staff encourage pupils to serve their community. Pupils raise money for various charities and visit local residential homes. Pupils learn about other faiths and cultures. They spoke in detail about the religions and beliefs that they have studied.

Pupils enjoy school and behave well. Most pupils attend school regularly. Systems and rewards are in place to encourage families to bring their children to school regularly. While improvements are clearly evident, attendance overall is still below the national average. Increasing pupils' attendance remains a school priority.

Governors are very skilled, and they know the school well. They provide effective challenge and support to school leaders. Staff are united in their praise of leaders. They feel well supported and value the training they have received.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors make sure that they carry out appropriate recruitment checks to make sure that all adults in the school are safe to work with children. They ensure staff receive safeguarding training. Staff understand what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil's welfare or safety. The school's designated safeguarding leads know their pupils and families well. They take appropriate action, where necessary, to protect pupils. Leaders' detailed records show they are persistent in their safeguarding work with other agencies. Pupils say that they feel safe in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils' attendance overall remains below the national averages. This means that some pupils do not benefit fully from the good quality of education on offer. Leaders should continue to make the improvements they have made so far by further by implementing their plans to address low attendance, including working with parents so that they understand the importance of their child's good attendance.
- A small but significant number of lower-attaining pupils do not catch up as quickly as they should in phonics. Leaders have rightly identified that some staff need further training to become experts at teaching phonics. Leaders should implement their plans and should check that all staff who teach phonics are experts so that the pupils they support catch up quickly and achieve as well as they should.

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	131082
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10121729
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	497
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Lee Hilton-Brammer
Headteacher	Ian Read
Website	www.watercliffemeadow.com
Date of previous inspection	14 May 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- Watercliffe Meadow Primary School is a much larger-than-average sized primary school.
- The deputy headteacher has recently become the head of school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium funding is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.

Information about this inspection

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

- We met with the headteacher, head of school, assistant headteachers, special educational needs coordinator, curriculum leaders and other members of staff. We spoke to a representative from the local authority. We also spoke to governors, including the chair of the governing body.

- We observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at breakfast club, playtimes and lunchtimes. We gathered pupils' views about the school through formal and informal discussions.
- We scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings and safeguarding documents.
- We also evaluated information relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance. We gathered the views of parents at the start of the school day. We also took account of the views of 26 parents who submitted free-text responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.
- We carried out a range of activities to check the arrangements for safeguarding pupils. We looked at the school's policies relating to safeguarding, met the designated safeguarding leader and considered records of the vetting checks the school makes on its staff. Inspectors asked many pupils for their opinions about safety, behaviour and bullying in the school.
- An inspector met with staff involved with the provision for pupils with SEND and those who provide support with pupils' personal development.
- We undertook deep dives into mathematics, reading, history and science. This involved a meeting with curriculum leaders, visits to a sample of lessons in these subjects and listening to pupils read. The deep dives also included scrutiny of pupils' books, consideration of art work on display and other kinds of work produced by pupils who were part of the classes we visited. In addition, we had discussions with teachers and a group of pupils from the lessons visited.

Inspection team

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