

Inspection of a good school: Meersbrook Bank Primary School

Derbyshire Lane, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S8 9EH

Inspection dates:

5 and 6 July 2022

Outcome

Meersbrook Bank Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a strong sense of community at Meersbrook Bank Primary School. The quality of the provision enables pupils to flourish. They are safe, happy and take pride in their school. Bullying almost never happens. When it does, staff resolve it quickly and effectively. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is purposeful. Staff generally have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes. Sometimes, in early reading sessions, pupils become excited and there is too much calling out. Teachers do not address this quickly enough consistently.

Pupils enjoy learning and are keen to do their best. They understand it can take time to learn new things and are willing to work hard. Most pupils love reading. Those who are learning to read are supported well. Most pupils become fluent readers quickly. A small number of pupils who fell behind during the Covid-19 pandemic are still catching up. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive high quality teaching and support. Children in the early years setting are nurtured and learn well.

Leaders create opportunities for pupils to go on a wide range of educational visits. The residential visits to an outdoor activity centre are especially popular. The visits facilitate pupils' independence well.

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

Curriculum planning in core subjects is detailed. It is sequenced so that pupils revisit important knowledge. Pupils learn well over time. Staff make highly effective use of assessment in English and mathematics to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge.

In some subjects, pupils remember what they learn in some depth. However, connections between different topics within a subject are not planned thoroughly as a matter of course. This means pupils do not learn some of the important concepts as well as they could. Assessment in these subjects does not enable teachers to identify specific gaps in pupils' knowledge consistently. Leaders are working to develop this shortcoming currently.

Pupils with SEND follow the same curriculum as their peers. There is appropriate support when needed. This is very effective in helping pupils to learn. The recently appointed special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has already established effective strategies for identifying pupils with SEND. Leaders involve external agencies when needed so that pupils get the right support.

In the early years, children are safe and happy. They play well together. Staff deliver a curriculum which prepares children well for Year 1. Children learn the vocabulary and basic skills they need to become independent. Staff plan activities to reinforce what pupils learn in teacher-led sessions. However, children choose the activities that they do. Staff do not direct children to activities based on their individual learning needs. This prevents children from learning as well as they could.

Staff are well trained to teach children to read. Most pupils become fluent readers quickly. Those who struggle with reading are given help to catch up. Leaders prioritise reading in the school. Pupils of all ages speak positively about books and authors. There is a very strong culture of reading for pleasure.

Governors are deeply committed to the school. They have a clear and detailed knowledge of its current strengths and areas that require further development. Leaders have ensured that staff have lots of training opportunities, especially in curriculum design. Staff value these opportunities. They are proud to work at the school. Staff morale is high.

Pupils behave very well in nearly all of their lessons. Sometimes, pupils get too excited and call out. Sometimes, teachers do not address this quickly. Pupils treat each other respectfully. They feel valued and are proud of their school community. Pupils learn about how to stay healthy, both mentally and physically. They learn about other cultures and have respect for people of all backgrounds. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

When pupils have worries, they let a member of staff know. Staff listen and take appropriate action. Leaders follow up their concerns. They involve other agencies, such as social services, when necessary. Occasionally, staff do not record the actions they take to keep pupils safe in enough detail. These minor omissions do not prevent staff from keeping pupils safe. The relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) curriculum helps pupils to know how to stay safe when working and playing online and offline.

Leaders carry out recruitment checks to make sure staff are safe to work with pupils in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, staff do not plan topics and assessments with enough precision. Pupils are not made aware of specific links between topics. Teachers do not identify gaps in pupils' knowledge precisely. Leaders should continue to refine planning, including the planning of assessments, so that teachers know what knowledge to emphasise and can identify any gaps in pupils' knowledge.
- Safeguarding is effective. However, there are minor omissions in record-keeping. This does not prevent staff from keeping pupils safe. However, it does prevent individual leaders having the fullest picture of every action taken when there is a concern about pupil welfare. Leaders should ensure that all actions, however small, are recorded in sufficient detail.
- In the early years, staff plan activities so that children secure the knowledge and skills they learn in teacher-led sessions. However, children choose the activities they do and do not necessarily choose their activities based on their individual needs. They do not learn as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that pupils are guided towards activities that meet their needs most effectively.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2012.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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	107002
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10227005
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	237
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tom Bassindale
Headteacher	Gemma Harvey
Website	https://meersbrookbank.sheffield.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed. The new headteacher took up the post in September 2020.
- Since the previous inspection, a new chair of governors has been appointed. The new chair took up the post in 2021.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held several meetings with the headteacher during the inspection.
- A discussion was held with the SENCo.
- The inspector met with four members of the governing body.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Pupils were observed reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspector spoke to pupils formally and informally about their learning and experiences at school.
- Safeguarding documentation and records for behaviour and attendance were checked.
- The inspector spoke with some parents at the end of the school day and reviewed the responses received through the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, including free-text responses. The inspector considered the responses received through Ofsted's staff questionnaire and through Ofsted's pupil survey.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed throughout the school day, including during lesson visits, and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. The inspector spoke to groups of pupils about their views on behaviour and the wider experiences they receive at school.

Inspection team

Zoe Helman, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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