

Inspection of Meadstead Primary Academy

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

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 November 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy to be at Meadstead Primary Academy. They enjoy coming to school to learn and to meet their friends. Pupils move around school calmly. They are polite and courteous to adults and visitors. Bullying in school is rare. Leaders address rare incidents of bullying well.

Leaders have high expectations for every child. They have developed an ambitious curriculum which gives pupils access to a broad range of knowledge. However, this is not implemented consistently or checked well enough. This leads to gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding of key concepts. In early years, leaders have not considered carefully enough how knowledge and skills can be developed sequentially.

Pupils in the 'Communication and Interaction Resource Provision' (CIRP) work with adults in small groups. The pupils know the routines in place and feel safe. Adults know the children well. Some pupils access lessons in the main school during the week, where they are supported by an adult. Sometimes, the work pupils are given does not precisely match their needs. Ten children aged between four and six attend 'The Hive' assessment centre. Adults interact well with children in this purpose-built area of the school.

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). It aims to give pupils access to a broad range of knowledge. The extent to which this ambition is realised is variable across subjects. In some subjects, such as art, leaders have not clearly defined the sequence of skills and knowledge that pupils should learn precisely. As a consequence, pupils cannot easily recall knowledge and make links to prior learning. In other subjects, such as mathematics, teachers do not regularly check that pupils have understood key concepts before moving on to the next stage of learning. Many pupils complete tasks and move on too quickly before they have secured this knowledge. This prevents them from applying their learning in different contexts.

In phonics, the curriculum is planned and sequenced carefully. Pupils learn the sounds that letters make and begin to blend these to read words quickly. Pupils develop fluency and accuracy in their reading. They enjoy reading a range of books and listening to stories read by their teacher.

The assessments that teachers use do not enable them to identify gaps in pupils' learning consistently. Opportunities are missed to address pupils' misconceptions. Subject leaders have responsibility for planning and implementing the school's curriculum. They monitor what happens in lessons. The focus of this monitoring is not precise. Leaders have an overly optimistic view of the curriculum and its impact on pupils. Leaders' checks on the curriculum focus more on what teachers have covered rather than what pupils have learned.

Support for pupils with SEND is variable. The small steps of progress that some of the pupils need to make are not clearly identified or shared. Teaching does not consistently enable pupils with SEND to develop the independence they need. Some parents and carers of children with SEND do not feel supported well by the school.

In the early years, children are happy and engage in stimulating activities. Routines are well established. Children move seamlessly from one activity to another. The classroom is a numeracy-rich environment. Adults take every opportunity to practise number activities with children. Curriculum plans in areas other than literacy and numeracy are underdeveloped. Leaders have not clearly identified the concepts and vocabulary that children should learn.

Leaders have revised and implemented the school's behaviour policy. They consulted pupils during this process. Pupils say that behaviour has improved in the school. Classrooms are calm and settled. On occasion, some pupils become distracted when the work they are set does not meet their needs. Behaviour incidents are logged and reviewed by leaders. This enables them to identify and address any behaviour concerns swiftly.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of clubs and activities. Opportunities are provided for all pupils to deepen their cultural experience as they progress through the school. Educational visits and visitors to school, including visits to universities and a local college, provide opportunities for pupils to consider career choices at an early age.

Pupils are given opportunities to debate and discuss ideas often. They explore different aspects of fundamental British values through assemblies. Pupils are currently learning about tolerance. Pupils have a limited understanding of different faiths and beliefs. Leaders have planned actions to address this.

Leaders take the impact of workload on staff into account when making decisions. Leaders are supported and challenged by the trust's regional education director, who monitors the quality of provision in the school. A newly formed academy council, which is yet to meet, has been established to provide feedback to the trust. Trustees discharge their duties in accordance with trust-wide policies.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are vigilant about the needs of pupils. They record concerns and work well with external agencies to support pupils.

The school's curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Leaders have considered the risks and vulnerabilities for pupils within the community. These issues are addressed within the curriculum and in assemblies throughout the year.

Checks are carried out to ensure the suitability of adults working on site. School leaders do not have clear oversight of these checks.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum does not identify the important knowledge that pupils need to be taught precisely. Pupils do not routinely acquire the knowledge that they need in some subjects. Leaders should develop curriculum planning further to enable pupils to build knowledge over time more effectively.
- Teachers do not regularly check that pupils have understood key concepts before moving on to the next stage of learning. Pupils do not apply their learning in different contexts or build their learning securely consistently. Leaders should ensure that teachers assess pupils' learning before moving on.
- The small steps of progress that some pupils with SEND need are not clearly identified. Work set for them does not meet their needs consistently well. Leaders should ensure that the key steps that pupils with SEND need to take are known to teachers.

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.

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	139132
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	10241157
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	235
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Hall
Principal	Nichola Smith (Executive Principal) Helena Lockwood (Head of School)
Website	www.meadsteadprimaryacademy.org
Dates of previous inspection	22 and 23 January 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Academies Enterprise Trust (AET).
- The number of pupils with SEND is above the national average.
- The school has nursery provision for children from the age of three years.
- The school operates a communication resource provision for 12 pupils and an assessment centre, 'The Hive', for 10 pupils. Pupils work in the assessment centre for one year. Places at The Hive are commissioned by the local authority.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The executive principal is currently absent from school and did not participate in the inspection.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the head of school, subject leaders and the trust's regional education director.
- An inspector met with the chief executive officer, who represented the board of trustees.
- An inspector also met representatives from the trust's central human resources team.
- Inspectors undertook deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history and art. For each deep dive, inspectors 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.
- Inspectors visited the CIRP and the assessment centre, The Hive.
- An inspector visited the school's breakfast club.
- Inspectors looked at the school's safeguarding records, including the single central record of recruitment checks. Inspectors also discussed safeguarding arrangements with leaders, teachers, support staff and pupils.
- Inspectors considered the 30 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the 26 responses to the staff survey. An inspector also spoke to some parents at the end of the school day. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Matthew Harrington, lead inspector His Majesty's Inspector

Jenny Thomas His Majesty's Inspector

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