

Inspection of Medstead Church of England Primary School

Roedowns Road, Medstead, Alton, Hampshire GU34 5LG

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 January 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to be part of this warm, friendly and inclusive school. They are polite and considerate to their teachers and each other. There is a strong culture of mutual trust and respect. Bullying is rare, and pupils know that adults will help them with any friendship problems. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including staying safe online. Staff have high expectations, and pupils achieve well. Pupils focus attentively on their work and are keen to improve, showing determination even when the learning is challenging.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn alongside their classmates and are ably supported by their adult support workers. The whole school community benefits from opportunities to learn British Sign Language, for example during the school prayer. Pupils firmly believe that all people are equal, irrespective of faith, gender, race or disability. They show impressively mature attitudes.

There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their leadership skills, such as in the role of 'young environmentalist'. Pupils enjoy playing and learning in the well-developed outdoor area. Pupils learn about living in harmony with nature and the benefits that the outdoors has on mental and physical well-being.

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

Leaders are determined that all children, including those with SEND, are well equipped to succeed in life. Leaders have prioritised developing the curriculum, particularly in English and mathematics. A new phonics scheme is helping children to become more confident readers right from the start of early years. Younger pupils persevere when reading aloud. Staff support them effectively to become more fluent. Reading is a priority and is viewed as both important and enjoyable by pupils. As one child said, 'Reading is learning.'

Leaders have designed a well-sequenced curriculum. Staff are clear about the knowledge that should be taught and how it should be organised. They use a range of appropriate resources and activities to help children build on their learning. In mathematics, for example, pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills are well embedded. Teachers adapt their teaching effectively when pupils do not understand something. As a result, pupils catch up quickly. In early years, skilled staff use a carefully considered range of strategies to develop and check children's understanding.

In most subjects, pupils, including those with SEND, demonstrate deep-rooted knowledge. Pupils remember what they have been taught and make connections within subjects. For example, in science, they confidently described designing and making a light-up Christmas decoration using their detailed knowledge of electrical circuits. However, a minority of subjects are not as well developed because leaders have not identified the precise knowledge, skills and vocabulary that pupils need to learn. Staff are not clear on exactly what pupils need to know and remember. This

leads to pupils not building up their knowledge sufficiently well in a small number of subjects. Leaders recognise this weakness and plan to provide staff with additional support and training.

Leaders ensure that pupils' personal development is strong. Pupils are taught about healthy relationships, responsible choices and well-being. Older pupils feel well prepared for the next steps in life. A wide and varied range of clubs and enrichment opportunities is in place. However, many disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND do not attend after-school clubs. Mindful of this, leaders have begun to offer additional clubs at lunchtime. There are many roles and responsibilities that pupils are encouraged to take up, such as 'young governors', peer mentors and arts ambassadors. Pupils say that some roles make a positive difference to the school community.

The school is calm and orderly, with firmly established routines. Skilled staff support pupils with behavioural challenges in a subtle and respectful way. In early years, staff teach children to be kind and considerate. Children in Reception are absorbed in their learning and show a high degree of independence. Leaders reflect regularly on what works well in the school and what could improve. For example, aware that some children are absent too often, leaders have put in place carefully considered ways to improve attendance.

Leaders and governors have a detailed understanding of the school. Governors are committed, attend training and fulfil their statutory duties effectively. Staff, including teachers new to the profession, enjoy working at the school. Most believe that the school has improved in recent years. However, a small minority think leaders could reduce staff workload further.

Parents and carers value leaders' work. Nearly all parents think that they receive helpful information about how well their child is doing. One parent, responding to Ofsted's Parent View survey said, 'Medstead is a special place where our child is happy, valued and enjoys learning.' This was typical of the views of many.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that there is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. They have put in place highly organised and well-maintained systems. The safeguarding team acts swiftly and decisively if there are concerns about a child. Leaders know pupils and their families extremely well. School staff work effectively with a range of external agencies to get the most helpful support for children. School leaders ensure recruitment checks on new staff and volunteers are robust and timely. Staff and governors receive regular, effective safeguarding training. The curriculum teaches pupils how to keep safe. Pupils show a sound understanding of internet safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the curriculum is not as strong as it could be. Leaders have not identified the precise knowledge, skills and vocabulary that staff should teach. Therefore, pupils do not always learn as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum in these subjects is as well developed as in the strongest subjects.

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	116300
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10242067
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	191
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kate Limbird
Headteacher	Matt Hunt
Website	www.medstead.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 June 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Medstead is a Church of England primary school in the Diocese of Winchester.
- The headteacher has been in post since 2021.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils who are deaf.
- The school had its last Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools in May 2017.
- The school runs an after-school club and uses an external provider to run a breakfast club.
- Currently, no pupils use alternative provision.

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

Information about this inspection

- 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 this into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held a range of meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator, and teaching and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with four members of the governing body and talked to a representative from Hampshire local authority and a representative from the Diocese of Winchester.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, art and design and geography. They also reviewed information from physical education, science and personal, social, health and economic education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector heard pupils read aloud to a known adult.
- Inspectors checked a range of policies and documents, including the school's single central record. They also reviewed the school's website and other records regarding the welfare of pupils.
- Inspectors gathered evidence to explore the impact of pupils' behaviour and the school's wider curriculum.
- Inspectors talked to pupils and staff throughout the inspection to gain their views about the school. This included the views of pupils and staff submitted via Ofsted's confidential surveys.
- Inspectors talked with parents at the start of the school day and considered the views of parents submitted via Ofsted's parent survey.

Inspection team

Maria Roberts, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Gareth Flemington

His Majesty's Inspector

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