

Inspection of Meadow View Farm School

Kirkby Road, Barwell, Leicestershire LE9 8FT

Inspection dates: 6 to 8 June 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very proud of their school. So are school leaders. They have every reason to be. Pupils speak passionately about how much they love coming to school. Parents and carers say how delighted they are with the school. One comment that is typical of many was, 'The school is amazing; it has transformed my child... and saved our family.'

Pupils benefit from carefully planned therapeutic farm sessions. They learn to take appropriate risks and develop confidence as they look after animals like Nora 'the biggest pig in the world!' They also love spending time in the woods. Expert teachers guide pupils' explorative learning.

Pupils bring what they learn outdoors about teamwork and safety into the classroom. Their exceptional behaviour shines through in the care, respect and thoughtfulness they show each other, the staff and visitors.

Leaders and staff want the very best for their pupils. They have provided a rich and loving environment in which pupils can thrive. Pupils feel safe and cared for. They live up to the very high expectations leaders have of them.

Pupils enjoy the many enrichment activities they can choose from, like 'soap club', dodge ball and 'space club'.

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

Leaders are aspirational for every pupil. They have created a broad, challenging and enriching curriculum that is well suited to pupils' particular needs. Staff provide excellent learning opportunities and therapeutic input to address every aspect of pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans. Leaders are determined that pupils do not miss out on 'normal primary school experiences'. They provide swimming lessons, educational visits and residential trips. These help pupils to prepare very well for their next stage.

Leaders plan each subject's curriculum in great detail. They give careful thought to what they want pupils to know and when. Teachers carefully check pupils' starting points. They use questions to check for any gaps in pupils' knowledge. Teachers use their detailed understanding of each pupil to teach them new knowledge in a way that reduces anxiety. Teachers reassure pupils that it is okay if they get things wrong, or do not know the answer. Teachers only introduce new knowledge when pupils are ready. They provide appropriate but challenging work for pupils to complete. As a result, pupils develop their knowledge well in many areas, including in subjects such as mathematics and English.

Teachers remind pupils to remember what they have learned before. Pupils make links to learning in other subjects. This is due to the careful way the teachers have connected what they want pupils to know and remember. Exceptional examples of

this are when pupils connect what they have been learning in the classroom to their experiences in the outdoor and farm environments. All staff are experts in helping pupils do this.

Pupils in the early stages of learning to read have regular, high-quality phonics lessons. Teachers focus on closing gaps in pupils' phonic knowledge. Pupils who need extra support get one-to-one help to catch up. Reading books are precisely chosen to match what pupils know. There are many opportunities for pupils to read across the curriculum. Leaders are passionate that pupils are exposed to high-quality, diverse texts. These books build pupils' vocabulary and understanding of the topics they are studying. Pupils become increasingly more confident readers.

Pupils work hard in a calm and purposeful atmosphere. They learn how to manage their emotions and behaviours. Leaders ensure that pupils who need it receive further support. Staff foster in pupils a readiness to learn and the resilience and determination to succeed. Pupils flourish with the encouragement they receive from staff. They thoroughly enjoy learning.

Promoting pupils' personal development is what leaders describe as the 'bread and butter of what we do'. Pupils understand more of who they are as they study the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme. They understand society's expectations of them as well as their place in their community. Leaders provide pupils with opportunities to engage with the local community. They invite in visitors such as the police and fire service. Pupils enjoy an extensive range of experiences and activities. For instance, pupils can learn to play a musical instrument, develop craft skills, run an enterprise, develop cooking skills, or learn to care for their favourite animals, like the guinea pigs Basil and Sage.

Pupils learn about difference. They know this is a positive thing and celebrate it. They talk about the importance of respecting all people. They know, for example, that people have different faiths and beliefs. The visits they make to places of worship enable pupils to understand these different beliefs. Pupils know how to keep physically and mentally healthy. They learn what makes relationships safe and positive.

Staff say working at the school 'feels like family'. They appreciate the training they receive and leaders' commitment to ensuring staff's well-being.

Leaders constantly strive for 'excellence as standard'. The members of the proprietorial board are uncompromising in their commitment to improving the school. They have ensured that the independent school standards (the standards) are met. Regular health and safety checks help keep the premises maintained to an excellent standard. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The safeguarding and relationships and sex education policies are available on the school's website.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders responsible for safeguarding are knowledgeable about pupils' individual needs and particular vulnerabilities. Close working relationships between school leaders, family support workers, social workers and other professionals mean any early indicators of concern are identified quickly. Staff are well trained to recognise any signs that might cause concern about pupils' welfare. The excellent implementation of risk assessment procedures ensures that pupils are kept safe.

Safeguarding records are accurate. Leaders act on any concerns in a timely manner. Leaders have appropriate procedures in place to manage any allegations. Staff work tirelessly with pupils to ensure that they understand how to keep themselves safe, including when working online.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	136949
DfE registration number	855/6019
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10286428
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	35
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	J R Education Ltd
Chair	Ryan Kilby
Headteacher	Katie Simpson
Annual fees (day pupils)	£55,000 to £84,000
Telephone number	01455 840 825
Website	www.mvfs.org.uk
Email address	office@mvfs.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 to 28 February 2019

Information about this school

- Meadow View Farm School is an independent special school for pupils aged between five and 11 years with special educational needs and/or disabilities. All pupils have social, emotional and mental health needs. Some pupils have additional diagnoses such as autism spectrum disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and those who have had adverse childhood experiences. All pupils have EHC plans.
- A new headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection in 2019. The previous headteacher is now the director of education and chair of the proprietorial body.
- Pupils travel to the school from several local authorities. The majority of pupils are placed at the school by nearby local authorities, including Leicestershire, Leicester, Rutland, Derbyshire and Warwickshire.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school's most recent standard inspection took place from 26 to 28 February 2019.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

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 headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other school leaders.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, English, mathematics and PSHE. 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 also discussed the science curriculum with leaders and visited outdoor learning sessions, farm and topic lessons.
- Inspectors also looked at individual pupils' EHC plans and checked these against the school's provision.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the proprietorial body.

- Inspectors considered a wide variety of school documents, including the school self-evaluation and school improvement plan.
- Inspectors took note of the responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and considered the results of the staff and pupil questionnaires. Inspectors met with small groups of pupils to gather their views.
- To judge the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors read the school’s relevant policies, scrutinised the single central record, checked the school’s procedures for the safe recruitment of staff and met with the safeguarding leader. Inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils.
- Inspectors considered relevant documentation and reviewed the school facilities across the site, to check the school’s compliance with the standards.

Inspection team

Dave Gilkerson, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

Steven Barnes

Ofsted Inspector

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