

Inspection of a good school: Mead Primary School

Amersham Road, Harold Hill, Romford, Essex RM3 9JD

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 June 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This school, which is at the centre of its community, is valued by parents, carers and pupils. Pupils are happy. Staff support the well-being of pupils and their families. Parents appreciate the partnership working and effective communication from leaders.

Pupils are safe. Staff are there for them should they have any concerns or worries. Pupils adhere to the five behaviour rules of the 'Mead Creed'. The school is a calm, focused and respectful place to be. Pupils receive help with their behaviour, when needed. Bullying is rare, and any occurrences are dealt with by adults.

Pupils actively participate in sport and music competitions. They are proud winners of the Stratford and East London Music Festival. Pupils have empathy with others less fortunate than themselves. They fundraise for charities. They enjoy taking on a range of leadership responsibilities. Elected members of the pupil parliament have helped to develop school uniform and feedback policies. Older pupils say they benefit from the 'University of Mead'.

The curriculum is sometimes not as ambitious as it could be. Some pupils, especially those in the early years and those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), do not learn as well as they could.

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

Relationships with families are strong and effective. Parents are supported to understand their child's learning and how to support them at home.

'Theo', the reading dog, and the 105 'books to read before you leave Mead' encourage pupils to read. Parents say that they are pleased with their child's reading progress. Staff's

knowledge of phonics teaching is strong. Catch-up programmes support pupils at risk of falling behind in their reading. However, teachers' understanding of pupils' phonic knowledge is sometimes inaccurate. On occasion, they do not provide books that support pupils to practise the sounds they know. As such, pupils' confidence and fluency in reading are affected.

Recent improvements to the curriculum are making a positive difference. Subject leaders have set out what pupils need to learn. In physical education, for example, leaders support teachers effectively to develop their subject knowledge. In some subjects, careful thought has been given to what pupils will learn in Years 1 to 6. However, leaders are not clear about the essential knowledge that pupils need to secure in the early years if they are to be well prepared for Year 1.

In some subjects, staff think carefully about how to adapt the curriculum to ensure that pupils learn important knowledge securely. For example, in the early years, children are well supported by adults to develop their understanding of number. Children use a range of resources to develop their mathematical knowledge. In Year 4, teachers take time to embed the concepts of fractions and decimals. This thinking about how to adapt the curriculum does not happen across all subjects. As a result, some pupils, including those in the early years and those with SEND, do not build their knowledge as well as they should. Linked to this, teachers' checks on what pupils know and remember are not routinely accurate. This means that gaps in pupils' learning are sometimes not identified and addressed.

Leaders and staff work hard to ensure that provision for pupils with SEND is effective. Good-quality training and strong links with other agencies enable staff to develop a range of strategies to support pupils' needs. Parents are positive about the support their child receives.

Pupils support each other and get along well. In the early years, children cooperate and focus on their chosen activities. Additional support and guidance help pupils who struggle to manage their behaviour. Pastoral support across the school is carefully considered.

Assemblies provide opportunities for pupils to learn about those with protected characteristics. Pupils gain valuable experience in the diversity of modern Britain. Pupils are tolerant of others and respect difference. Pupils proudly spoke to inspectors about the different school clubs they attend.

Leaders and the governing body have developed a sense of renewed ambition for the school. The teaching of phonics and mathematics has benefited from recent external support. Staff feel well supported by leaders, who are mindful of their workload and well-being. They appreciate the training opportunities provided, which supports their development, and they value the open-door policy of leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know pupils and families well. Safeguarding records are detailed and closely monitored. The recording system enables leaders to gain a comprehensive picture of safeguarding issues. Leaders work well with a range of agencies to ensure that pupils and their families receive the support they need. Staff receive regular training and updates. They are alert to any problems that pupils may face. Pupils are supported to understand how they can keep themselves safe, including when accessing the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- When pupils are learning to read, the books they are given are not precisely matched to the sounds they know. This means that pupils do not learn to read with fluency as quickly as they could. Leaders must ensure that staff accurately assess pupils and match books to each pupil's phonic knowledge so that pupils can practise the sounds they know and improve their reading confidence and fluency.
- In some subjects, the school's curriculum does not identify the key knowledge that all pupils, including those with SEND, need to secure in the early years if they are to be ready for subject learning in Year 1. Leaders need to ensure that curriculum thinking sets out the key knowledge and skills that they want children to know and remember from the early years so they can get off to a good start in Year 1.
- The work of subject leaders to improve the quality of education is not complete in all areas of the curriculum. This means that some teachers are not provided with sufficient guidance to adapt their teaching in these subjects. Some pupils, including those with SEND, do not grasp key knowledge. Leaders need to provide teachers with guidance and training to adapt their teaching well in all subjects, for all pupils, including those with SEND.
- The checks that teachers make on pupils' learning, especially for pupils with SEND, do not consistently identify gaps in individual pupil's knowledge and skills. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to revisit knowledge that is not secure in their long-term memory. Leaders should ensure that assessment assists teachers in identifying clear next steps for pupils, including pupils with SEND.

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 good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually, this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2016.

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	102322
Local authority	Havering
Inspection number	10200189
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	734
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Alan Kemp
Headteacher	Amy Holmes
Website	www.mead.havering.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	6 and 7 October 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has experienced several changes of headteacher and a new chair of the governing body since the previous inspection. The current headteacher took up post in January 2023.
- There is a specially resourced provision for up to 12 pupils with autism spectrum disorder.
- This school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- This school is part of The Learning Federation with Broadford Primary School.

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 that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, teachers and support staff.

- Inspectors met with several groups of pupils. Inspectors also observed pupils at playtimes.
- The lead inspector met with seven members of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. In each deep dive, inspectors spoke with leaders and teachers, visited lessons (including in the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND), spoke with pupils and looked at examples of pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke with leaders and looked at pupils' work in a small number of other subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to some pupils read to staff.
- To check the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors checked the record of pre-appointment checks, looked at safeguarding documentation, spoke with staff, pupils and members of the governing body and spoke with a representative of Havering local authority.
- Inspectors studied a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and development plan.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also spoke with some parents at the beginning of the school day. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

Rebekah Iiyambo, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sukwinder Samra

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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