

Inspection of Meadow Park Academy

Norcot Road, Tilehurst, Reading, Berkshire RG30 6BS

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 November 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

The headteacher of this school is Stieve Butler. This school is part of Anthem Schools Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Mohsen Ojja, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jay Bhutani.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to talk about their learning. As a result of a carefully thought-out curriculum, pupils achieve well. They are enthusiastic and are confident to share their views. They are particularly passionate about reading. They talk about the books they have read and the ones that their teachers have read to them. They find the reading mural inspiring and younger pupils use this to find characters they know. Older pupils share their favourite genres and recommend books they have enjoyed to their friends.

Pupils are confident that they have an adult in school to share any worries with. This helps them to feel safe. They know that pupils who wear a blue lanyard have an important role in school as 'well-being ambassadors'. They feel confident to talk to these pupils on the playground.

There are high expectations for behaviour. As a result, pupils behave well. They understand why this is important. Pupils report that staff support them well. This includes helping them to understand their own feelings.

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

The school utilises the support from the trust and local area to train and develop staff. As a result, there is a high-quality programme of staff development. This means that staff have strong subject knowledge. They understand the curriculum and how to deliver it.

A well-designed curriculum is in place from the early years and beyond. This curriculum is ambitious for all pupils. The school has thought about what pupils should learn throughout their time at the school and how it can help them to love learning. The school has used this to identify the most important information that pupils will learn from the early years to Year 6. Staff present content clearly and give pupils opportunities to recall what they have learned previously. This helps pupils to learn the intended content. However, teachers do not always check that pupils have fully understood this key information before moving on to the next activity. This means that pupils sometimes have gaps in their learning or misconceptions.

Robust systems are in place for the early identification of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff know what to do if they are concerned that a pupil may need extra help. The school works well with external agencies where necessary and makes sure that plans help pupils to get the support they need. This begins in the early years, where staff are particularly alert to spotting indicators that a child may need something different or additional to help them learn alongside their classmates. Sometimes, however, teachers do not make the most effective adaptations to learning activities, to enable all pupils to be as successful as they could.

Reading has been successfully prioritised in school. A genuine love of books permeates throughout the school. Pupils are keen to delve into a story and find out what happens next. The school is ambitious for pupils to learn to read as quickly as possible. The school knows that this will help pupils to achieve well in other areas of school life, as well as in the future. All staff follow the same shared approach to teaching reading. Staff are well trained and check how well pupils have understood the sounds they have been learning. Extra support is given to those who haven't grasped these sounds and to help pupils to keep up with their peers.

High expectations for behaviour are prevalent throughout the school. These expectations begin in the early years, where children learn the routines of school life and how to navigate situations such as taking turns and sharing. Pupils across the school report that they are supported well by staff. They do not worry about behaviour. Staff feel the same. Staff are well trained in the school's approach to conflict resolution. This means that there is a consistent approach throughout the school. As a result, there is a calm, purposeful atmosphere in classes and during social times. In the dining hall, pupils are kind and courteous.

The school has carefully considered pupils' wider development within school. There is a comprehensive personal, social and health education curriculum which helps pupils to understand key aspects such as staying healthy and being a good friend. Pupils enjoy learning about people who have influenced modern-day life. Older pupils debate themes in a mature and sensible manner. There is a wide offer of clubs for pupils, who appreciate the opportunities they have. All pupils are encouraged to participate, including those with SEND. The school has thought about ways to enhance pupils' understanding through workshops and visits. During the inspection, for example, pupils were considering the concept of 'farm to fork' by engaging with a workshop about how sausages are made.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Checks during lessons on whether pupils have understood the intended content are not consistently effective. This means that future teaching does not address misconceptions or gaps in knowledge well enough. The school must ensure that in-lesson assessments enable teachers to form an accurate picture of gaps in pupils' knowledge, so they can be acted on quickly.
- From the early years and beyond, staff do not always make the most effective adaptations for pupils to learn the intended curriculum. This means that some pupils do not learn as deeply as they could. The school should ensure that staff have the training and support required to know how to best meet pupils' needs more precisely through the learning they do in class.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	138372
Local authority	Reading
Inspection number	10288023
Type of school	Primary/First
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	365
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jay Bhutani
Headteacher	Stieve Butler
Website	www.meadowpark.anthemtrust.uk
Dates of previous inspection	18 and 19 April 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was absent during the inspection.
- The school currently uses two unregistered providers of alternative provision.
- The school runs an on-site breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection team met with the deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher. The team also met with other school leaders, staff and pupils.

- The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body. She also spoke with a representative from Anthem Schools Trust.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, computing and history. For each deep dive, the 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.
- The inspectors also looked at books, visited a sample of lessons and spoke to leaders about writing.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspection team checked the single central record of recruitment checks and talked to leaders responsible for safeguarding. The inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils informally.
- The inspectors considered the responses to the confidential staff and pupil surveys and spoke to a range of staff and pupils about their views of the school.
- The inspectors took account of the 37 responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the additional 24 free-text responses. An inspector talked with some parents on the first morning of the inspection.
- The inspection team met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils informally during social times and in lessons.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school development plan and school self-evaluation.

Inspection team

Sara Staggs, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Linda Culling	His Majesty's Inspector
Scott Reece	His Majesty's Inspector

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