

# Inspection of a good school: The Meads Primary School

The Meads Primary School, Mill Way, East Grinstead, West Sussex RH19 4DD

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Inspection dates:

23 and 24 January 2024

## Outcome

The Meads Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are made to feel valued as soon as they enter this school, where staff greet them individually as they start their day. Pupils feel listened to through their involvement in the school council and junior council, both of which contribute to school policy. Pupils feel safe and confident to express their opinions or seek help should they need it.

The school has high expectations for behaviour. These are based on its understanding of pupils' well-being. Pupils behave well in lessons and are courteous, holding doors open for each other in corridors, for example. Children learn to work with many different pupil groups during their journey through the school. These opportunities are used well to develop pupils' characters and promote the school's values. One parent commented that 'children are very happy here and have a lot of wonderful friendship groups'.

Overall, pupils achieve well. However, despite the school's high ambitions, some pupils do not achieve as well as others in some areas. Ongoing support is helping to raise expectations and develop staff expertise, ensuring that all pupils attain equally well across the breadth of the school's curriculum.

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

Pupils learn a broad and ambitious curriculum based on carefully developed and challenging goals. Where improvements are relatively new, ongoing work is helping to deepen teachers' subject knowledge in these areas. The school is taking appropriate steps to safeguard teachers' workload and well-being during this period of change. The school has recently reviewed the Reception curriculum so that children are learning exactly the right knowledge to prepare them for Year 1. From the Reception Year to Year 6, the curriculum is broken down into small steps of learning, which enables pupils' knowledge to build up logically over time.

The school has carefully considered and sequenced the precise knowledge pupils must understand. Recently, the mathematics curriculum has been further refined to ensure

pupils develop an even more secure grasp of number and basic mathematical skills. Starting in Reception, children learn by heart to recognise the number of individual objects. They play counting games that help them to develop fluency and apply their knowledge of number. Adults skilfully support them in building confidence and resilience to 'have a go' as they park cars in the correct number bay and count which ladybirds have one more or one less than the others.

In more well-established subjects, such as mathematics and geography, teachers have secure subject knowledge. They use questioning well to check pupils' understanding during lessons and match activities precisely to pupils' learning needs. For example, in geography, when learning about hot and cold places, pupils in Years 1 and 2 consider what people wear in different parts of the world and why. Older pupils are challenged to find the four- and six-digit map references of local landmarks as they learn how to interpret maps. Teachers remind pupils about the most important knowledge they have learned previously as they explore new ideas. As a result, pupils' understanding builds securely over time. Staff understand pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. They use resources and adapt activities skilfully, so pupils with SEND are able to follow the same curriculum as their peers.

The school has made reading a priority. The inviting library, from which pupils regularly choose books, is at the hearth of the school. Rich discussions with adults help children in Reception build their understanding of language. No time is wasted in starting to learn phonics, which is taught every day. The school identifies pupils at risk of falling behind and supports them effectively. However, there are some inconsistencies in how phonics is taught, which means that some pupils do not learn to read as quickly as they should.

The school offers many opportunities for pupils to learn more widely and develop their interests. Pupils take part in sporting and arts clubs such as football and pottery. They learn about fundamental British values and the importance of treating everyone equally, no matter their differences. Events that raise awareness, such as Children in Need, and a charity for people with Down syndrome help pupils to value making a positive contribution to society. Pupils develop responsibilities as librarians and members of the sports crew. They are taught how to keep safe on the internet and how to carry out basic first aid. The forest school is the highlight of their week, as pupils learn how to keep safe around the fire, roasting marshmallows and enjoying hot chocolate together.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In some subjects, staff do not yet have all the subject knowledge that they need to deliver the curriculum effectively enough. This means that pupils do not always achieve

as well as they could. The school should ensure that ongoing training provides staff with the expertise and confidence to teach all subjects equally well.

- There are inconsistencies in how well pupils are supported to learn to read. This means that some pupils do not learn to read quickly enough. The school should ensure that phonics is taught consistently well across the school so that all pupils develop confidence and fluency in learning to read as quickly as possible.

## 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 September 2018.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	125964
<b>Local authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10296330
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	295
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Diana Holmes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nicole Essex
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.meads.w-sussex.sch.uk">http://www.meads.w-sussex.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13 September 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- There has been a new chair of governors and headteacher since the last inspection.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- 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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher and assistant headteachers.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, they 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.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector reviewed a range of the school's documents, including self-evaluation reports, minutes of local governing body meetings and behaviour incident logs.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at playtimes. They spoke with pupils about bullying, behaviour, and leaders' expectations of pupils' behaviour.

### **Inspection team**

Jo Brinkley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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