

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



12 March 2024

Paula Wareing  
Headteacher  
Meadowside School  
Pool Lane  
Woodchurch  
Wirral  
Merseyside  
CH49 5LA

Dear Miss Wareing

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Meadowside School**

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 6 February 2024, on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills. The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and took place because the school has received two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous graded (section 5) inspections.

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's overall effectiveness, but to identify and report on the school's progress. It is to highlight to the school and parents any improvements that school leaders have made since the school's previous graded inspection.

During the inspection, I discussed with you, other senior leaders, governors, staff and a representative from the local authority the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. We discussed the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. I also completed visits to lessons, spoke to staff and pupils, observed a number of pupils read to an adult and scrutinised documentation. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

**Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the school to become good.**

The school should take further action to:

- ensure that the school development plan sets out the intended impact of planned actions so that the school can articulate the difference such actions are making
- introduce and embed the planned new approach to improving pupils' attendance at school, to help improve attendance rates and reduce persistent absence.

## **Main findings**

The senior leadership team has been restructured since the last inspection. The two previous assistant headteachers have now been appointed as deputy headteachers.

The school has acted swiftly to make improvements. At the time of the last inspection, the school was in the early stages of implementing a new curriculum. Pupils were also mainly placed in class groups according to their age. The curriculum is now becoming embedded. Staff are more confident and increasingly effective in delivering the curriculum. The school has thought carefully about the grouping of pupils within the different curriculum pathways. Pupils are now placed in learning groups which are more closely linked to pupils' needs and how they best learn, as opposed to their age. This means that within each teaching group, staff provide learning activities which are more tailored to pupils' needs. This is helping them to learn well.

The school's approach to the teaching of phonics and early reading is now fully established. Considerable staff training has helped to ensure the consistent delivery of the phonics programme in lessons. Previously, pupils who were at the early stages of reading did not have opportunities to read often enough. Phonics is now part of the daily timetable for these pupils, so they can practise their reading skills often. Pupils are making better progress through the reading curriculum as a result.

Those pupils who read to an adult during the inspection mainly demonstrated confidence and fluency in their reading. Reading books are closely match to the sounds that pupils know. There is a consistent approach to one-to-one reading, where a pupil reads to an adult. For example, pupils are exposed to some of the more challenging words in the reading book before they start to read. However, the support given to pupils while they read is inconsistent. Staff sometimes read the words for pupils when pupils struggle, instead of helping them to use their phonics knowledge to achieve success.

The restructuring of the senior leadership team has been a positive step. The new structure has allowed the school to maintain a closer oversight of the quality of education on offer. Similarly, the governing body has strengthened the support and challenge provided to the school. For example, governors complete the same training as staff, such as in phonics, and visit the school to check on its progress against the action plan.

The school has put in place a comprehensive development plan which clearly outlines the actions to be taken in each area of improvement. The school evaluates the plan each

term to check whether the planned actions have been completed. Although the school has systems in place to measure improvement, and therefore the impact of planned actions, this is not made clear in the plan. This makes it challenging for the school to easily demonstrate the difference their improvement actions are making over time.

The school is aware that the attendance of some pupils is low and that many pupils are persistently absent. This has been the case over the last two academic years. The school is keen to address this issue. It is currently enhancing its approach to pupils' attendance to introduce more rigour and to clarify the expectations from all stakeholders, including parents.

The school is making the most of the support available from the local authority, particularly to improve the quality of education on offer. The school works closely with a local authority adviser who visits regularly. The support and challenge provided is helping the school to move forward at pace.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of governors, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Wirral local authority. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Ian Hardman  
**His Majesty's Inspector**