

# Inspection of Meridian Community Primary School and Nursery

Roderick Avenue North, Peacehaven, East Sussex BN10 8BZ

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Inspection dates: 11 and 12 June 2024

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are proud to be part of this inclusive school community. They understand the school's values of respect, honesty, kindness, strength and responsibility. Pupils demonstrate these through their exceptional behaviour, conduct and attitudes to learning. Pupils build highly positive relationships with one another and with staff. They are caring and kind to each other. This creates an environment where pupils feel happy, safe and valued.

In lessons, pupils listen attentively, engage actively and work hard. This enables them to meet the high expectations that the school has for them. Pupils enjoy learning new knowledge. They know the importance of coming to school regularly. As a result, pupils attend well.

Provision for pupils' wider personal development is extensive. Pupils appreciate and benefit from the carefully planned 'forest school' curriculum. This helps to develop pupils' skills, talents and interests and builds pupils' strength of character.

Pupils are supported to become resilient, confident and articulate individuals. They are nurtured well by staff, who give them every opportunity to flourish. Pupils explain that they are taught to resolve any differences and 'shake off' negative emotions. Pupils are confident that they can talk to any adult in the school. They know staff will always listen and help them.

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

The school is ambitious for what all pupils can achieve. The curriculum is sequenced so that pupils build knowledge and skills across a broad range of subjects. The development of curriculum vocabulary is central to all learning. This helps pupils talk about what they know and can do with confidence. From the Nursery onwards, the school has carefully planned what pupils need to learn. In most subjects, such as mathematics, teachers make regular checks to see how well pupils are achieving. They use this information to adapt the curriculum as needed. However, in a small number of subjects, these checks are not as effective. Staff do not always check carefully enough that pupils understand the intended learning. This means that some pupils do not always get the help they need to keep up.

Most pupils are learning and achieving well overall. Last year's outcomes at the end of key stage 2, and the phonics screening check in Year 1, were not as strong as they have been in previous years. This was partly due to high numbers of pupils joining and leaving the school at different times throughout the year, affecting the overall outcomes. However, the school is highly reflective. Its work to resolve relative weaknesses is quick, thorough and effective. Staff share a determination that all pupils will be given the greatest chance of success.

Reading is a priority from when children start in the Nursery. The school's well-trained staff teach phonics consistently well. The youngest children enjoy listening

to, and joining in with, their favourite nursery stories and rhymes. As soon as they are ready, children learn that letters make sounds. Most pupils quickly become fluent and confident readers. The school environment is 'literature rich'. Pupils appreciate the school's well-stocked library. Every classroom has an inviting book corner to encourage pupils to read. As a result, pupils are avid readers.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They strive to uphold the school's rules of 'ready, respectful, safe'. The outside areas reflect the school's ambition to want pupils to play. During social times, pupils play together, sharing the vast array of equipment on offer to them. Whether playing in the sandpit, participating in imaginative games, or building structures, older pupils are positive role models for the younger ones.

Ambition and provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is a strength of the school. There is precise focus on identifying the needs of pupils through a well-understood and carefully communicated process. Leaders passionately believe in inclusion. The 'Ocean Rooms' facility was opened in September 2023 for pupils with autism. It reflects a detailed understanding of the needs of the pupils who attend. The school is rightly proud of the provision on offer.

The school's wider curriculum provides exceptional learning opportunities for pupils. These include a visit to Glyndebourne Opera House to sing with the orchestra and visits to the National Gallery and Buckingham Palace in London. Pupils are proud to take on responsibilities such as being a librarian or 'eco-councillor'.

Pupils have a strong sense of respect for everyone as individuals. They understand commonalities shared between different cultures and religions. Pupils make a significant contribution to their community. An example of this was their work with the town council to plant trees in their local park.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The checking of what pupils know and can do is not always precise. As a result, some pupils are not learning as much as they could. The school should ensure that staff have the training they need to know when pupils require additional help. This will enable teachers to identify the right support for pupils who might be at risk of falling behind.

## **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>	114475
<b>Local authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10321794
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	471
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Barbara Gerding
<b>Headteacher</b>	Claire Westcott
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.meridianschool.co.uk">www.meridianschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school has provision for two-year-olds.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND. This caters for infant-aged pupils with autism.

## 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and extended leadership team, including leaders responsible for SEND, pastoral development and safeguarding.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, music and art. Inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors observed pupils reading, visited phonics and reading lessons and spoke to pupils about their reading opportunities in school.
- A wide variety of school documents, including the school improvement plan, were reviewed by the inspectors.
- Inspectors held discussions with governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of parents' responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and parents' free-text responses. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- 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.

### **Inspection team**

Luisa Gould, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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