

# Inspection of Meadowside Academy

Halfpenny Lane, Knaresborough, North Yorkshire HG5 0SL

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Inspection dates: 18 and 19 June 2024

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since December 2012.

The headteacher of this school is Kerry Williams-Kendall. The school is part of the Elevate Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Nigel Ashley, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by John Brear.

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

Meadowside Academy welcomes pupils with care and compassion. Pupils understand and accept others' differences. Staff are extremely supportive and have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement. Children in the Reception Year make a strong start to their education in an exciting, well-planned and nurturing environment. Staff, pupils and parents are proud to be part of the school community. They work together to make it a great place to learn.

There are excellent relationships between pupils and staff. Because of this, pupils are happy and know that staff will always help them do their best. School values, such as resilience and resourcefulness, are well understood by pupils and modelled by adults. The school encourages pupils of all ages to work hard, be kind and respect others. Opportunities for pupils to learn about different faiths, cultures and beliefs help to create a kind and caring atmosphere at the school.

The school is aware of pupils' different talents and interests. Staff plan enrichment activities and opportunities for discussion within the curriculum, for example trips to local museums, visiting speakers from charities or time in the forest school. All these activities develop pupils' understanding and appreciation of the world around them. These opportunities are highly regarded by pupils and parents.

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

The school has changed the content of the curriculum and the order in which it is taught to reflect the needs and interests of pupils well. This has resulted in a carefully planned and ambitious curriculum. The curriculum, particularly in some foundation subjects, is new. Where this is the case, pupils' knowledge of what they have been taught over time is less secure. However, in other subjects, pupils remember learning about a wide range of topics and perform well in external assessments.

Staff use questioning effectively. They listen to what pupils have to say and promote discussion in classrooms well. This helps staff to identify what pupils have, and have not, understood. This is especially effective in the early years setting. However, the way in which older pupils' knowledge and understanding is assessed over longer periods of time is less secure, notably in the foundation subjects. The school are still developing a robust assessment process in this regard.

Children in the early years begin to learn to read quickly. Because of this excellent work, older pupils are also confident readers who enjoy different books. The school have ensured that their library is full of different authors' work to match pupils' interests. The school's approach to teaching phonics is highly effective. Leaders closely monitor each pupil's reading journey. Pupils who need extra help learning to read are well supported by skilled staff. Parents are encouraged to read to pupils at home. Each classroom has a 'Book Nook' which pupils love to make use of.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are an important part of the Meadowside Academy family. Pupils arrive at the school with a wide, and often complex, mix of needs. The school continually explores the best way to meet these needs. This includes adjustments in lessons, additional adult support and the provision of 'nurture' spaces. The support available to pupils, especially for those with the most complex needs, requires further refinement. Leaders are committed to making this provision exceptional.

Most pupils at the school are polite, respectful and communicate well. They listen to one another and staff when they are talking or explaining new ideas. At times, the support pupils with SEND receive to regulate their behaviour could be more effective. However, new behaviour and rewards systems are working well to create a calm and positive atmosphere within the school.

The way in which the school develops pupils personally, as well as academically, is strong. Pupils are taught how to stay safe online, eat healthily and respect those who are different. Bullying is rare. Pupils told inspectors that the school ethos of 'nurturing courage, curiosity and kindness' is well understood by everyone at the school. Pupils are keen to take on leadership roles on the 'Student Council' or as 'Eco-Warriors' and represent the school in sporting competitions. The school are steadily increasing the number and variety of enrichment opportunities available to all pupils.

Staff feel well supported by leaders when taking on new roles and responsibilities. They appreciate and benefit from a varied training programme. Leaders at all levels are passionate, committed and ambitious for the children who attend Meadowside Academy. Recent changes at the school have been very well handled to reduce the impact on pupils' learning and staff well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The school's curriculum has recently undergone several changes, particularly in the foundation subjects. Assessment in these subjects does not ensure that gaps in pupils' knowledge are consistently identified and addressed. This means that some pupils are not learning the intended curriculum as well as they might. The school should ensure that assessment is used effectively to identify and address what pupils need to know and remember.
- The support for pupils with significant additional needs lacks precision. This means that pupils' ability to regulate their behaviour or learn the intended curriculum is not as strong as it could be. The school should ensure that the

provision is precisely tailored to meet the wide range of pupils' needs and that all staff have the specific training they require to support pupils with SEND.

## 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>	144168
<b>Local authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10315584
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	211
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	John Brear
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kerry Williams-Kendall
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.meadowsideacademy.org">www.meadowsideacademy.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school joined the Elevate Multi Academy Trust in September 2017.
- Several senior leaders are new to the school since the previous inspection.
- At the time of the inspection, an interim executive headteacher, Mr Alex Hope, was in post.
- The school uses one provider of alternative education. This provider is registered with the Department for Education.
- The school runs breakfast and after-school clubs.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND who attend the school is above average.

## 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 interim executive headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector also spoke with the CEO of the trust. The lead inspector also met with members of the local governing body and trustees.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with some pupils and teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspection team also met with leaders responsible for pupils with SEND and the early years provision at the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors 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 inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in a range of situations, including in corridors, at breaktimes, at lunchtimes and in lessons. The inspectors also spoke to pupils about behaviour and bullying. The inspectors spoke with leaders, teachers and pupils about the school's programme of personal development.
- The inspector considered the responses from parents to Ofsted Parent View. This includes the comments submitted via the free-text facility. The inspector also considered responses to Ofsted's online pupil and staff surveys.

### **Inspection team**

John Linkins, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Steve Kernan

Ofsted Inspector

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