

Inspection of Melrose School

Church Road/ Whatley Avenue, Mitcham/ Raynes Park, Surrey, CR4 3BE

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 July 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school where positive working relationships between staff, pupils and their families is championed. No relationships are taken for granted and people work together well. Pupils said they feel safe and trust that the adults that work with them are there to help. Consequentially, for many pupils' behaviour improves over time and classrooms are mostly calm and orderly.

Pupils are listened to. They can join the school council or take part in broader decision making across the school. Pupils' opinions and interests are well considered. They have helped design important spaces in the school and request vocational subjects they are interested in.

The school encourages pupils to develop themselves in preparation for the world outside of school and for adulthood. There is an extensive offer of broader opportunities such as bike riding, travel training, horse riding and ice skating. These activities help to develop pupils' resilience, confidence, independence and strengthen relationships.

Many pupils who attend this school have had a negative experience of education before they joined here. The curriculum has been designed to help pupils re-engage with learning, as well as achieve the qualifications they need for their next stage of education, training or employment.

One parent commented, typical of others: 'My child is now thriving thanks to this school. My child is much happier and settled than ever before.'

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

Subject curriculums are sequenced and well ordered so that knowledge and skills build progressively. The school has carefully thought about what pupils need to know first, before they can learn new and more complex knowledge and skills.

Mostly lessons are clearly structured. There are some opportunities for pupils to recall and practice what they know and can do. Many teachers check understanding routinely. They have the subject knowledge they need to address errors and misconceptions. Teachers, mostly choose appropriate activities and make adaptations so that all pupils can access the learning. However, occasionally these approaches are not routinely applied in all lessons. This means that sometimes pupils' misconceptions or gaps are not addressed or pupils are not able to access the learning as effectively as their peers.

The school uses a systematic approach to teaching phonics. Pupils read books that closely match their phonics knowledge. For those weaker readers, who need further intervention to strengthen their reading fluency and comprehension, interventions

are embedding. Some pupils have been helped to catch up and increase their confidence in reading.

Leaders work well with other professionals to ensure that the right provisions are in place for the individual needs of pupil. The therapeutic offer has recently been significantly increased. All pupils benefit from this provision, through either an individual or universal offer.

Staff use nurturing and supportive strategies to resolve incidents of behaviour. They value the training they have received from the schools' team of therapeutic professionals. Staff get to know pupils very well. This has helped them to identify the subtleties in pupils' behavioural presentation or mood. As a result, staff are able to prevent pupils becoming emotionally dysregulated more readily.

The school has carefully planned and sequenced the personal, social and health education curriculum. Pupils are helped to develop an age appropriate understanding of how to keep mentally and physically healthy. Pupils are taught about the dangers of substance misuse. This is delivered by school staff as well as visiting experts. Pupils are taught about being self-aware and are helped to consider the impact of theirs and others actions.

Pupils are provided opportunities to experience a range of careers, and this begins in primary. For example, they learn about caring for animals, through regular visits to a farm. In the secondary school they have opportunities to learn barbering and mechanics. Some pupils then have the chance to gain vocational qualifications in health and beauty or motor vehicle maintenance.

Many pupils have a history of poor attendance prior to joining this school. Staff get to know the reasons why there are barriers that affect regular attendance. The school personalises plans to help pupils attend school more regularly. For instance, pupils get to choose their key worker, or they steadily build up their time in school. This helps pupils feel confident and build their trust in the staff team. As a result, many pupils attendance at school improves over time.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There is not a consistent pedagogical approach to teaching and learning. This means on occasions pupils' gaps and misconceptions are not addressed swiftly. Or adaptations to learning are not as effective. The school should ensure that all staff have the resources and pedagogical expertise needed to deliver all aspects

of the curriculum equally well, so that pupils know, remember and can do more over time.

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	102697
Local authority	Merton
Inspection number	10323333
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	5 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	James Holmes
Headteacher	Carla Chandler (executive headteacher)
Website	www.melbury.merton.sch.uk
Date(s) of previous inspection	15 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school operates across 3 campuses. Melrose Primary and Secondary provision at Church Road, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 3BE as is Worsfold House. Whatley Campus operates from Whatley Ave, Raynes Park SW20 9NS. Cobham Court provision is at Haslemere Avenue, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 3PR.
- The school makes use of two alternative provisions.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school is part of the Melbury College partnership.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and PSHE. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, had discussions with staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects as part of this inspection.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for improvement.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record of pre-employment checks; 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.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, teachers and the wider school team.
- Inspectors met with the chair of governing body and other members of the governing body.
- Inspectors met with a representative from the local authority.
- They also considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents, staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Kieran Bird, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jacquie Fairhurst

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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