

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Watercliffe Meadow Community Primary School

Boynton Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S5 7HL

Inspection dates:

24 and 25 June 2025

Outcome

Watercliffe Meadow Community Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is warm and welcoming. Pupils enjoy attending and are happy. The school has high ambition for pupils' achievements. These ambitions are generally met.

Behaviour across the school is generally positive. Classrooms are calm and provide a supportive environment for pupils to learn in. There are nurturing relationships between adults and pupils. These help pupils feel safe. Pupils make responsible choices, for example, by considering the impact of their actions and learning from their mistakes.

The school is committed to developing pupils' broader development, this is effective. Pupils have a strong understanding of personal safety, particularly how to keep themselves safe online. Pupils take part in a range of residential visits during their time at school, including visiting London and an outdoor adventure centre. These trips are designed to offer diverse and challenging experiences. They are carefully sequenced to build independence, teamwork and self-belief. Pupils appreciate these opportunities. They help them develop confidence in new situations and build resilience.

Pupils have a range of leadership responsibilities in the school. These include school council and healthy mind champions. These roles further support pupils' understanding of the curriculum and learning to become a good citizen.

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

The phonics curriculum is well structured. The school prioritises high-quality training for staff. As a result, staff support pupils well with building accuracy in reading when

decoding and blending sounds. The school regularly checks pupils' understanding. They use this information to identify any pupils who have any gaps in their knowledge. The school successfully address these gaps through targeted sessions. As a result, pupils quickly develop early reading skills and apply these confidently in their independent reading.

The curriculum in core subjects is implemented effectively. This is evident in the quality and progression seen in pupils' books. In mathematics, well-designed practical activities support pupils to grasp concepts before applying them in problem-solving. Pupils revisit important learning regularly. This helps them to remember and deepen their understanding.

Staff have strong subject knowledge and use it to extend pupils' learning. They ask targeted questions to challenge and support development. These approaches identify and address misconceptions quickly and effectively. The wider curriculum is carefully considered and links to the local area. However, the strategies used to support pupils to remember the wider curriculum are not as effective. As a result, some pupils struggle to recall key knowledge.

Pupils behave well in classrooms. Pupils show respect towards each other and to adults. However, at times, some pupils are not as engaged in their learning as they could be. On these occasions, staff do not consistently respond effectively. This means pupils do not learn as much as they could. The school places a strong emphasis on improving attendance and has introduced innovative strategies to engage pupils. For example, weekly inter-class competitions, styled on a football league format, are motivating pupils to attend more regularly.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified promptly. The school ensures they learn through well-matched support and resources. As a result, pupils with SEND access the curriculum successfully and achieve well.

The environment in early years is stimulating and promotes exploration across all areas of learning. Staff place a strong emphasis on developing children's social and emotional skills. They model language effectively, helping children to develop strong communication skills. Children are encouraged to take turns and resolve conflicts independently. The early years successfully builds strong foundations for future learning and children's wider development.

Pupils learn about the importance of respect and inclusion through a well-planned personal development curriculum. Pupils understand the importance of treating everyone equally, regardless of background or identity. They learn about fundamental British values. Opportunities such as school council elections help pupils understand and experience democratic processes. This ensures that pupils grasp why fairness matters in society. Pupils learn how to recognise healthy and unhealthy relationships. They are confident and clear about how they would respond to situations involving peer pressure. This prepares pupils well for life beyond school and supports their emotional well-being.

The school demonstrates a clear and ambitious vision for its pupils. It has established a positive culture, where staff well-being is valued and actively supported. Leaders' strong commitment ensures that both staff and pupils flourish within a kind and inclusive environment. This is ensuring standards at the school are maintained. Governance is strong. Governors are well trained, knowledgeable and proactive in holding leaders to account. They maintain a clear understanding of the school's strengths and priorities and monitor key areas closely.

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 wider curriculum subjects, the strategies used to support pupils to remember the curriculum are not yet fully embedded. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their learning. The school should ensure that the strategies to support pupils to remember the curriculum are consistently in place, so that pupils can successfully learn more.
- At times, strategies to support pupil to engage in their learning are not consistently applied. Consequently, some pupils are not learning as much as they could be. The school should ensure that approaches to engage pupils in learning are applied consistently and effectively across all classes, so that pupils can learn as much as they could.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness in February 2020.

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	131082
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10346376
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	491
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Lee Hilton-Brammer
Headteacher	Ian Read
Website	watercliffemeadow.com
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 February 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school has a breakfast club, overseen by the governing body.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and members of the senior leadership team.
- The inspector met with representatives of the governing body.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, 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 considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for pupils, staff and parents. This included any free-text responses in Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Andrew Yeomans, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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