



The Meadows Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109010
LEA South Gloucestershire
Inspection number 278100
Inspection dates 16 May 2006 to 17 May 2006
Reporting inspector David Driscoll AI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Bath Road
School category	Community		Bitton
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Bristol BS30 6HS
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0117 9322203
Number on roll	182	Fax number	0117 9326919
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	25 September 2000	Headteacher	Mr Jon Barr

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4 to 11	16 May 2006 - 17 May 2006	278100

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The Meadows is a smaller than average primary school. The area that the school serves is similar to the national average in most respects, although very few pupils come from a minority ethnic background. The pupils' standards on joining the school vary from year to year, but generally they are below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties in the school is average each year, but their distribution across the year groups is often unequal.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school provides a good education and good value for money. The school's evaluation of its own performance agrees with that of inspectors, and this is supported by the positive views of parents. Pupils make good progress, as a result of good teaching. They are well cared for and safe in the school. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. As a result, children make good progress and the current group have done particularly well in terms of mathematical development and linking sounds and letters. Pupils' personal development is good, as is their academic progress. A strong emphasis on developing their independence starts in Reception and continues throughout the school. The range of extra activities offered is especially good, and clubs are often organised by the pupils themselves. The school is well led and managed. The headteacher has a clear understanding of its performance, and how to improve it. Data is generally used well. However, the systems for tracking pupils' progress in Years 1 and 2 are not providing a clear enough picture of performance. This makes it difficult for teachers to identify emerging signs of underachievement and target their support where it will do most good. Good progress has been made since the last inspection and the school is well placed to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- improve the systems for tracking the progress made by pupils in Years 1 and 2 to give a clearer picture of which groups are not doing as well as others
- use the results from the above to target extra support more accurately in the classroom where it is most needed.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress in all years, regardless of their background or ability. Children's standards on joining the Reception class vary from year to year. The current pupils joined with standards that were below average. They are making good progress and are now reaching standards that are expected for their age. Their progress in number work and phonics is particularly good. Pupils in Year 6 who took the national tests last year left with average results, having made good progress from their below average standards on joining. The pattern is similar this year, with the school is on course to maintain standards and exceed its challenging targets. Pupils currently in Year 5 have fallen behind other classes, because they made less progress when they were in Year 4. Their progress had been satisfactory, but not as good as that observed in other years. The school identified this relative weakness in performance, implemented plans to provide better support, and the pupils are now quickly making up for the ground lost. Progress is best for those groups in Reception and Years 3 to 6 who have been identified through assessment as being at risk of underachieving. In these cases, the school has been able provide extra support and boost the pupils' standards.

However, in other years, the assessment systems are not robust enough to identify such pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils are keen to take responsibility for many aspects of school life and play a good part in the community. Their independence is developed particularly well in the Reception class, and then reinforced as they move through the school. Pupils run their own clubs, taking responsibility for registers and basic safety checks such as chairs being in good condition. There is now a flourishing range, from dance to a pony club. Pupils also know how to live a healthy lifestyle. They understand why they should only bring healthy snacks to school, although many still bring unhealthy packed lunches, despite the school's efforts. Pupils enjoy being at school and have good attitudes to their work. They like the lessons, and attend and behave well. They listen carefully to the teacher, but not always to each other. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe both in and out of school. They have a good awareness of others' welfare and consider bullying to be '...anything you do that makes someone else feel sad'. Bullying is rare and pupils know how to get help if it is needed. Pupils have a good understanding of other people's differences because teachers take the time to talk to them about this and plan it carefully into lessons. Pupils are supportive of those who need help, both in and out of school. They regularly raise money for charities and have good links with the local communities, including the church and local businesses. Pupils make good progress with their basic skills such as literacy and numeracy and so are well prepared for life after they leave this school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good, so pupils make good progress in their learning. Pupils enjoy their lessons because teachers plan a variety of interesting ways of presenting difficult work. Studying Macbeth in Year 4, for example, became an exciting experience when pupils had to write alternative endings to the Witches' 'Hubble bubble' speech. The teacher pretended to be one of the witches in the play and maintained discipline by amusingly threatening to turn pupils into frogs. The amount of work produced was considerable for all pupils, who themselves bubbled with enthusiasm all lesson. Although most pupils make good progress in lessons, there are occasions when their progress is not checked well enough. Incorrect answers on whiteboards or pupils not putting their thumbs up, for example, are not always picked up so the teacher is not sure if all have understood. Assessments of progress in the Foundation Stage and Years 3 to 6 are accurate. They are collated in such a way as to provide a very clear picture of strengths and weaknesses for the class, individuals and groups within the class. In Years 1 and 2, a range of different systems are used to assess pupils' work. At present, these

systems are not producing a coherent picture of pupils' progress, because they do not all result in a National Curriculum level and are not collated centrally. This means that the support for individuals is not as accurately targeted in Years 1 and 2 as it is in other years.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. There are regular opportunities for pupils to learn subjects such as music and modern foreign languages, which are often taught by specialists and which pupils enjoy. The range of extra activities is very good; the pupils ensure that their varied interests are represented by running clubs themselves if necessary. Pupils benefit from regular trips and visits, learning how to become independent and how to cope with change. The curriculum is well planned to cover national requirements, but planning to meet the needs of individual pupils, especially middle to lower attainers in Years 1 and 2, is not as well developed because information on the progress of different groups of pupils is not as readily available.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school cares for pupils well so they are safe and happy. Pupils are carefully supervised both inside and out to ensure that any accidents are either prevented or are quickly dealt with. Teachers and other staff know their pupils well and plan carefully to help those with learning difficulties and those who are very able or gifted. However, they are not as easily able to support those whose attainment is below average in Years 1 and 2, because information about their progress is not as accessible. The school has several systems to ensure that attendance is carefully monitored so that any problems can be ironed out, but does not offer many rewards for good attendance. Child protection and health and safety procedures are well documented and comply with local requirements. Any pupils who are at risk are identified and supported well; the school works successfully with outside agencies to help its pupils get any support they may need.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher uses data on standards, together with the views of parents, to gain a clear and accurate understanding of the school's performance. Weaknesses in performance are analysed well in the Reception class and in Years 3 to 6. This has allowed the school to target its actions in the places where they will do the most good, such as improving boys' writing or the progress made by lower attainers. However, the school's managers are already aware of the required improvements identified in this report. Plans are already well developed to improve the quality of assessment in Years 1 and 2. Governors are well informed about the school's performance. Their strategy of choosing an area of the school's work, and

then carrying out detailed monitoring over an extended period, is most effective. When the school does take actions, they are carefully considered and the implications thought through. Strategies such as purchasing and deploying laptops have proved to be cost effective and successful in overcoming weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection. The school works well with parents and takes their views seriously. Parents have been concerned about the 'job share' arrangements in Year 1. The school has responded effectively by reducing the sharing element so that one teacher now takes the class for the great majority of the week and the pupils continue to make good progress.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

19 May 2006 Dear Children As you know, we came to see you at work recently and check on how well you are doing. We really enjoyed ourselves in your school. The dance club was brilliant and very well planned by the Year 3 pupils. Mrs Peach loved the poems Year 4 wrote and thought that some of them were even better than the one Shakespeare himself wrote for the Witches in Macbeth. You made us feel very welcome in the school, with the card from Alder class and all of you who stopped to say hello. You are nice to each other, as well as visitors. You learn lots of new things in your lessons, especially how to do things on your own. The grown-ups take good care of you and make sure that you are safe in school. You know what to do to be healthy. Some of you could do better by asking the people who make your sandwiches to give you healthier food in your packed lunches. The grown-ups who run the school get a good idea of how well you do, but we have asked Mr Barr to find out even more when you are in Years 1 and 2 so the teachers can help you learn even better. Thank you for helping us with our work and for being so kind to us. Best wishes Mr Driscoll Lead Inspector