

# Mead Vale Community Primary School

## Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109112
Local Authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	324902
Inspection dates	24–25 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Stephen McShane HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Nicholas Smart
Headteacher	Mr Jeffrey Bateson-Winn
Date of previous school inspection	20–21 March 2006
School address	Kestrel Drive Worle Weston-super-Mare BS22 8RQ
Telephone number	01934511133
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## Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 25 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff, a parent and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at school improvement planning, school policies, curriculum and teachers' planning, pupils' work and minutes of meetings of the governing body. In addition, 164 completed parental questionnaires were scrutinised.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- current attainment and progress in English
- the attainment and progress of individuals from groups who may be at risk of underachievement
- the extent to which elements of the school's provision is outstanding across all key stages.

## Information about the school

Mead Vale is a larger than average primary school situated in a district of Weston-super-Mare. Most pupils are of White British heritage, with a small number from other backgrounds. The proportion of pupils claiming free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. A large number of pupils receive additional support due to their learning difficulties in language and communication or their behavioural, emotional and social needs.

Since the previous inspection, the school has received a Learning Aspect Award for its work on learning mentors and regained accreditation for Activemark and Healthy Schools. It has gained the NAAC mark for its work with gifted and talented pupils. It has supported another local school and has been awarded National Support school status, with the headteacher being a National Leader of Education.

The school provides before-and after-school care provision.

## Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

1

Capacity for sustained improvement

1

## Main findings

Mead Vale is an outstanding school where, due to the commitment of the headteacher and his staff, pupils attain high standards and are cared for very well. In this harmonious and welcoming community, pupils' attitude to learning and behaviour are exemplary. The majority of parents are very positive, describing the school as 'fantastic' and 'wonderful', rightly recognising that it is 'well run', 'well organised' with 'helpful and approachable staff' who ensure that 'each child has a safe, enjoyable and memorable passage through their primary years'.

Through careful tracking of each pupil's progress, the headteacher and staff are alert to any pupils who may not reach or better the national expected standards when they are 11 years old. Challenging targets are set; pupils are grouped according to their particular abilities and needs and provided with a rich and relevant curriculum. Any pupils who need additional help are identified quickly. They are given swift and carefully targeted interventions that soon accelerate their progress, so that they too can reach high standards.

Pupils enter the school with attainment below average and, particularly in Key Stage 2, make good and often outstanding progress. For a number of years, pupils' achievement in mathematics and science at Mead Vale has been as good as that of the highest performing schools in the country and, following careful school improvement work; this is now also the case in English as well. The progress of pupils in individual lessons, however, is more variable. While the general quality of lessons is good and some lessons are excellent or have outstanding features, a few are just satisfactory. This is because they lack sufficient opportunities for pupils to participate and to apply and extend their own learning in order to make better progress. In these lessons, pupils occasionally spend a lot of time listening passively to the teacher or engaged in long 'hands-up' question and answer sessions.

Mead Vale has worked very hard since its last inspection to ensure that it is always improving. It has continued its excellent work with a wide range of partners, including supporting other schools. Its staff and governors have remained strongly committed to raising the attainment of every individual pupil, constantly adapting and improving its provision so that all pupils can achieve to their full potential, whatever their background, gender, religion or culture. All of this work, alongside the school's accurate and perceptive self-evaluation and high quality school improvement plan, demonstrates that it continues to have outstanding capacity to improve.

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

- Ensure that pupils extend and improve their own learning and progress by:
  - providing more consistent opportunities to work in pairs, in groups and independently
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning with each other and actively participate in their lessons.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1
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- Pupils enjoy their learning greatly. They are very attentive and very well behaved in lessons. They talk with great enthusiasm about the many different opportunities they have at Mead Vale.
- Pupils enter the school with below average attainment and leave with significantly above average attainment, having made good and often outstanding progress.
- Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make outstanding progress. Individuals are set very challenging targets and helped successfully to meet them through an appropriate curriculum and specific targeted interventions.
- The school's focus on ensuring the progress of every individual ensures that all groups of pupils are achieving exceptionally well.
- Pupils feel very safe. They have an excellent understanding of safe practices and are highly confident that the staff will support them. They are well aware of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and their eager participation in playtimes and in sporting clubs, inside and outside school, shows that they take this very seriously.
- Pupils are extremely reflective and can discuss political, moral and ethical issues intelligently. They act considerately and sensitively toward all different members of their community. Many pupils who have encountered personal difficulties discuss with remarkable openness the nature of these difficulties and the difference the school has made to their lives.
- Pupils are extremely proud of their community and the contribution they make, for example by taking positions of responsibility, becoming first aiders, by fundraising, by organising stalls at the school fete or by membership of the school council. They feel listened to by the school and clearly have had influence in improving the environment.
- Attendance is broadly average but is affected by the persistent absence of a few pupils. Punctuality is very good. Pupils feel confident about moving to the next stage of their education. They have strong literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. They demonstrate strong team working skills. They have insufficient opportunities, however, to apply these skills in other activities and in lessons in other subjects.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	1
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	1
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	1
How well do pupils behave?	1
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	1
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	2
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	1

## How effective is the provision?

- All lessons are well planned and well structured. Teachers carefully take pupils through key concepts and ideas. Teachers prepare appropriate resources and use interactive whiteboards well to support successful learning.
- Relationships between pupils and teachers are excellent.
- Additional adults and smaller groups are used very effectively to ensure that pupils receive excellent individual support and help.
- In the best lessons, teachers' subject knowledge is outstanding, which means that misconceptions are quickly remedied and questioning constantly challenges pupils.
- There is some variability in the quality of learning in lessons. In particular, in a few lessons, learning is rather over-controlled by the teacher, the pace is too slow and pupils spend too long simply listening or engaged in one type of activity.
- There is clear evidence of a great deal of good and regular marking that supports pupils' learning. However, there is some inconsistency in the quality of this across the school.
- The adaptation of the curriculum for different groups - for example, pupils with learning difficulties or pupils who are more able or gifted and talented - is very effective and is key to the progress pupils make. The school uses specialist teachers and other adults very well to give pupils a very good range of experiences, including modern foreign languages. The many additional activities, the clubs and the before- and after school-provision provide the pupils with many memorable experiences that inspire their future learning and develop important skills. Pupils talk excitedly about their trips, for example to

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

the Houses of Parliament, the many singing and drama performances that they do with partners and the various residential trips, including skiing and camping.

- The care, guidance and support given to pupils at Mead Vale are outstanding. Individual pupils are known well to staff. On a day-to-day basis, there are procedures and practices that keep them very safe. The school responds very quickly to individual additional needs and targeted provision is put in place speedily for those that need it. There are many examples of the school responding to needs of particular groups, for example the work of the learning mentor helping pupils make greater progress in English, the use of signs and symbols to aid the development of communication and literacy for pupils with more complex needs, specific support to newly arrived groups to help them understand aspects of the English education system, and a breakfast club.
- The school works hard to improve attendance. There are rigorous checking and follow-up procedures in place. There are clear rewards and sanctions and close links with the education welfare officer whose intervention is used appropriately.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

The quality of teaching	2
The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

## How effective are leadership and management?

- The headteacher and his leadership team are extremely ambitious for all pupils. They are tireless in their pursuit of very challenging targets for all, whatever their starting points or backgrounds. The very positive outcomes for all pupils demonstrate the school's outstanding work in promoting equality and tackling discrimination. The impressive staff morale, their outstanding commitment, the extensive monitoring and very clear direction from the headteacher ensures that the school is continually improving. The school is exceptionally well run and organised. Staff have clear roles and responsibilities and carry these out diligently. They are strongly committed to continuing professional development and keep up to date to improve practice further. Governors are knowledgeable and well trained and support the school to maintain high standards and bring about further improvements.
- The school's promotion of community cohesion has particular strengths in the way in which pupils are very knowledgeable about and well prepared for their future life locally, and internationally.
- There are comprehensive safeguarding procedures in place. Staff and governors have a very good knowledge of issues. Risk assessments are detailed, training is up to date and the school is proactive in making excellent links with other agencies to support pupils.
- The school works very effectively with a wide range of partners. Through these, pupils are offered a wide range of different opportunities, for example specialist drama and sport, and it has well developed links internationally and with local

business.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with attainment generally below that expected. They make good progress as a result of good teaching and learning. This is particularly evident in reading, due to well-planned and focused sessions where knowledge and understanding are checked regularly. Well-established routines encourage the children to be very confident, attentive and purposeful. They respond well to different activities and collaborate well together. At times, adult-directed sessions are a little too long, which means children become fidgety. Some opportunities for more child-initiated learning are missed. A very good induction process means that children settle well. Ongoing contact with parents, including diaries that give a good view of progress and targets with photographs and annotations, means that they are kept well informed about, and actively engaged in, their child's learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage has improved since the previous inspection, particularly in outdoor provision and improved learning and progress in the children's writing. The staff, who work very well together as a team, have a clear idea of what needs to be done next to improve even more.

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents and carers are pleased with all aspects of the school. Many



mention the fantastic opportunities, the hard work of the headteacher and the staff whom they find to be very approachable and willing to act quickly to remedy any concern. The school is working creatively to make its excellent communication with parents/carers even better.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Mead Vale to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. If a parent has more than one child at the school, we ask them to record an answer against all the questions, for each of their children.

The inspection team received 164 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 742 parents and carers registered at the school.

	Always	Most of the time	Occasionally	Never
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	113	40	10	1

## What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, training or development. This may refer to the acquisition of skills, knowledge, understanding or desired attributes. Attributes include qualities or personal competencies which are important to the development of the pupil; for example personal, social, cultural, emotional or health.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.



29 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mead Vale School, Weston–Super-Mare, BS22 8RQ

Thank you so much for making us feel welcome when we inspected your school recently. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing you in lessons. You told us how much you enjoy school and appreciate all the memorable and exciting things that do.

Our inspection found that Mead Vale is an outstanding school. The test results for your school are much higher than in many schools nationally. We saw how hard your headteacher and the staff work to help you all get the best results you can, making sure that you are in the right groups and that you have the right support. You do lots of extra things to inspire you to learn.

We were very impressed by your excellent behaviour and the way you care for one another. We felt that Mead Vale was a friendly and happy community where everyone was valued. We were impressed by how much you reflected and thought deeply about things and your very good knowledge of how to live safe and healthy lifestyles.

We saw a great deal of good learning at Mead Vale but we have asked the teachers to make it even better by involving you more. We have made some suggestions, for example working more in pairs and by yourself and discussing your learning more so that you know how to get even better and teachers know what would help you most.

You have wonderful adults supporting you including a dedicated headteacher and committed governors who are always looking for ways to make your school become even better.

I am sure that you will continue to work hard so that you have lots of success and the school continues to be one of the best.

Good luck in the future.

Yours faithfully

Stephen McShane HMI  
Lead inspector

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