

Meadow Farm Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112752
Local Authority	City of Derby
Inspection number	325675
Inspection dates	3–4 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Christopher Moodie

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	259
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Carran Stevenson
Headteacher	Mrs Clare Morgan
Date of previous school inspection	7 February 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Foyle Avenue Chaddesden Derby Derbyshire DE21 6TZ

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	3–4 February 2009
Inspection number	325675

Telephone number
Fax number

01332 662631
01332 677432

Age group	3-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Meadow Farm Community Primary School is a slightly larger than the average primary school and serves a mixed-housing residential area of Chaddesden in Derby. It has Early Years Foundation Stage provision and pupils can start at the school in the term after their third birthday. The majority of pupils are of White British backgrounds and a small but increasing number of pupils speak English as their second language. The proportion of pupils claiming free school meals is average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. Children's attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage is well below that expected for their age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Meadow Farm is a good school. The very effective leadership of a committed headteacher is a significant factor in the continuing success of this school. Pupils are taught in a very caring and welcoming environment which enables them to progress well from the moment that they enter the school. As a result, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and their personal development is outstanding.

School leaders know the school well and plans to make further improvements are in place. A committed and effective governing body works hard to support the school and make sure that the available resources are well used. The levels that the children start school with are lower for boys than for girls. Despite this, all pupils make good progress in almost all parts of the school. This means that by the time they leave, standards in English, mathematics and science are broadly average. The most progress is achieved by girls in English, as their standards are above average at the end of Key Stage 2. However, the standards that boys attain in English and mathematics across the school are lower than their national counterparts. The school is well aware of the issue. It has worked hard to address it and the gap is now beginning to narrow.

Pupils who need extra help with their work are well supported and make similar progress to others. The teaching is of a good quality, with some that is outstanding. All teachers create a positive learning atmosphere in their classrooms and pupils enjoy their lessons. Teachers mark pupils' work very carefully and provide them with outstanding guidance that helps them to understand how to improve. Assessment data is being increasingly well used to inform teaching, and the needs of pupils with different abilities are being met. This is a significant factor in helping pupils to enjoy their learning.

Pupils have very positive attitudes towards school and their behaviour is exemplary. This is a product of the ethos that the headteacher creates and is spread across the school by every member of staff. Relationships between pupils and staff are very productive. Staff know the pupils very well and this supports the nurturing environment in which they learn and flourish. The school has worked successfully with parents and the Educational Welfare Officer to improve pupils' rate of attendance. The good curriculum is supported by a wide range of after-school activities and is enriched by visits and visitors. The school recognises that there are insufficient computers available for pupils to use, and this limits the acquisition of important skills.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start in the Nursery. They settle into routines quickly, play happily together and learn to share and make choices through a wide range of purposeful play activities. From below average beginnings, they make good progress overall and achieve well especially in their personal, social and emotional development. By the time they move into the Reception classes, children are able to enjoy the rich diet of carefully planned activities that are tailored to their individual needs and interests. While standards remain below average by the end of the Reception year, children are beginning to make good strides towards reaching average standards. Children gain an increasingly broad understanding across all areas of learning and they learn to apply their knowledge gained from one area to another, because of good teaching. For instance, one group of children were able to explore an addition activity using stars and another group enthusiastically talked about their spaceship ideas as part of their work on 'the

sky'. Children's personal development and well-being are outstanding because of the excellent care and welfare provided for them by all staff. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well. There is a strong team of teaching and support staff who work closely together. They make careful observations of children that are beginning to be linked to the new developmental criteria. All activities in the highly stimulating classrooms are well organised. Outdoor opportunities for the Reception classes are more limited as there is no covered area. Parents are very pleased with the start their children make and typically say, 'We're delighted with the school, the atmosphere and environment. It is a great place where our son is enjoying learning'.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards for boys in English and mathematics across the school.
- Improve the provision for information and communication technology so that all pupils have easy and frequent access to computers and it is regularly used to enhance learning across the whole curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

As a result of effective teaching across the school, all pupils make good progress. The school sets challenging targets for pupils and these are achieved in almost every year group. As a result, pupils achieve well. When they leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2 standards are average in English, mathematics and science. Reading standards are higher than those in other subjects, and this is due to the high priority that the school gives to the early acquisition of reading skills. Recent work on developing writing has been effective, and the pupils' work is showing improvement. While boys attain lower standards than girls throughout the school, their starting points are also lower and they make equally good progress. The difference in attainment is particularly significant in English, where girls attain at levels which are above the national average. The school is aware of this difference and has worked hard to address it. Reading materials, particularly aimed at boys have been a big hit and helped improve reading skills. Adjustments to the curriculum have also been made which has shown increased engagement in lessons and learning.

The small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified at an early stage of their education and receive effective support which enables them to make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The pupils' very positive attitudes towards school are reflected in their enthusiasm for their work. The school's nurturing ethos and consistently good adult role models enhance the pupils' personal development so that they are happy and feel safe. Pupils say that bullying is not a problem and that the school has effective ways to handle any incidents. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and this is reflected in their sensitive awareness of others in the school and how they support one another in lessons. Relationships are equally positive between adults and pupils. The school works very well to develop the pupils' excellent understanding of how to keep themselves fit and healthy. They enjoy their morning fruit snack, well-balanced school lunches and physical activities. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding and this view is endorsed by the parents who returned questionnaires. Pupils

are confident learners and play a full part in the life of the school. They have good opportunities to show responsibility and initiative, for example, by organising events to raise funds for the school and for local and national charities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good because there is a constant drive for improvement. When teaching is good or outstanding, lessons are very well organised and resources are used effectively to make learning interesting. Teachers use learning targets in lessons that pupils understand so they are always focused on how they can improve. This approach is contributing to the good progress that pupils make. All staff get on extremely well with pupils and praise is well used to motivate them to try hard and do their best. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan exciting lessons that interest pupils. In lessons, most pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning. However, where there was insufficient challenge, a few pupils, especially boys, had difficulty sustaining interest. Planning takes good account of what pupils already know. Support for those who find learning difficult is effective and very well managed. Pupils are aware of their targets and this further supports their good achievement. Increasingly, pupils are assessing their own and each other's work and this provides more information for them to know how to improve. Marking of pupils' work is outstanding and teachers consistently use lesson targets to help pupils check their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Enhanced by an excellent range of visits, visitors, and extra-curricular activities, the curriculum meets the needs of pupils well. The wide range of subject displays in classrooms and around school demonstrates the broad and balanced nature of the curriculum. Together with an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy, cross-curricular links are made between subjects to help pupils make more meaningful connections in their learning and so strengthen the development of their skills. Where needed, a modified curriculum caters well for those pupils who find learning difficult to ensure they also make good progress. Adjustments have also been made to increase the motivation and interest of boys and a greater emphasis on sport has shown a positive response by boys.

There is a strong creative element in the school, for example, in pupils' producing some very good artwork, drama and poetry. There is a successful school choir and numerous school productions. Although maximum use is made of the limited ICT equipment the school has to support pupils' learning and progress, there are just too few computers available. This restricts the opportunities pupils have to use their ICT skills across the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The headteacher sets the tone for the excellent care and consideration provided for each child. There is a very strong community spirit in the school and a shared concern that all should thrive and achieve as well as they can. Adults know pupils and their families very well and are alert to each pupil's needs. This leads to trusting relationships and pupils have confidence in raising any concerns with adults in the school. They learn in a safe environment where support for

those who have particular learning needs is very good. There are rigorous procedures for child protection and for medical and emergency aid which meet requirements. Procedures for safeguarding are robust. Risk assessments are fully embedded in school practice. Academic guidance is exemplary. As well as the meticulous tracking of their progress, pupils are given clear academic advice and guidance through the high quality marking of their work. Pupils benefit from outstanding links with a wide range of external agencies together with the full support of parents and carers.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is effectively led at all levels. The headteacher provides very strong leadership and provides a clear direction for improvement which permeates the whole school. She is well supported by the senior management team who all have extremely high expectations and share her vision for improvement. This helps pupils of all ages and abilities to reach outstanding levels in their personal development and good progress academically. Parents and the local community are overwhelmingly positive about the school and recognise the headteacher's role in its continuing success. The performance of the school is effectively monitored by all staff. There are rigorous systems in place for self evaluation. As a result, the school's strengths and weaknesses are clearly identified, and this leads to improvement plans that are focused on key areas such as writing, mathematics and boys' achievement. The governing body is well informed and provides the school with effective support. Finances are managed well and the school offers good value for money. Links with external agencies are well developed and the school shows its determination in securing high quality services for pupils and their parents. The school's plans to develop an on-site Children's Centre have been accepted by the local authority. This is evidence of how the school has successfully gauged the needs of its local community, and is active in trying to address them. The strengths of the headteacher and her staff mean that the capacity for the school to improve is good.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

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

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

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

5 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Meadow Farm Community Primary School, Chaddesden, DE21 6TZ

Thank you very much for making the team of inspectors feel so welcome at your school. You helped us to find out all about your school and were very polite and kind. We were very pleased to see how wonderfully well behaved you are at school. You are kind and considerate to one another and should be very proud of the high standards that you set. The snow made it an exciting time but you were all very mature and sensible.

Mrs Morgan and all of the staff at your school are very good at making your school a happy and hard-working place for you all. We saw lots of things that we really liked, and noticed how much you enjoy your lessons. The good progress that you make is a result of a real team effort at Meadow Farm, and your positive attitudes are a very important part of your learning.

I have asked Mrs Morgan and the teachers to make the school even better by concentrating on two areas:

- help boys to do better in English and mathematics
- obtain more computers and make sure that you use computers more often in different subjects.

You can, of course, help them by working as hard as you can.

I would like to pass on my best wishes to all of you, and thank you once again for making my visit so enjoyable.

Yours faithfully,

Chris Moodie

Lead inspector