

Meadowfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134516
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	342862
Inspection dates	16–17 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Susan Bowles HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	453
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr M Shaw
Headteacher	Mr Richard Mellard
Date of previous school inspection	5 May 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors, one of whom was there for half a day. Sixteen lessons involving 16 teachers were observed. Inspectors had discussions with three small groups of pupils, two governors, around seven members of staff and, informally, a small number of parents. They sampled work done by pupils across the age range over the past year. They observed the school's work, and looked at policies and minutes of meetings, and at records of the monitoring of teaching and pupils' behaviour. One hundred questionnaires from pupils, 85 from parents and 30 from staff were also read.

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

- how effectively teaching across the age range promotes higher attainment and caters for pupils' different needs
- how well the school promotes good attendance and positive attitudes
- the quality of arrangements for safeguarding
- how well the school's leaders have raised expectations and improved the quality of provision.

Information about the school

Meadowfield School was formed in 2004 from the amalgamation of two primary schools. It moved into new buildings in November 2005. Meadowfield Children's Centre shares the school's site and provides childcare with other services. The school provides Nursery and Reception classes. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above average. Mobility is high. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The proportion of children from minority ethnic backgrounds has increased and is slightly below average. The school holds the Investors in People Award, Basic Skills Quality Mark, Healthy Schools Award, Leading Parent Partnership Award and the second level of the Stephen Lawrence Award. The school was given a Notice to Improve in May 2009. A monitoring inspection the following December found it had made satisfactory progress on the issues for improvement.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. The school has now added a sharper focus on achievement to its well established caring ethos. Following well-led improvements to the sound quality of teaching, pupils' progress and attendance have clearly improved. Standards of attainment are still low but have begun to rise for all age groups. The more challenging targets for pupils' achievement set for the current year are within reach.

Teachers now understand more precisely what each pupil can do and have improved the pace of learning. However, in some cases, their explanations, questioning and feedback fall short of stimulating pupils to think for themselves, or firmly consolidating understanding; then the pace of learning is steady rather than strong. Marking is consistently sound, but teachers do not always make sure pupils have met the targets set. The curriculum meets requirements and has some good features, but is not really well tailored to the pupils' needs and interests. Good care, support and guidance make a major contribution to pupils' generally satisfactory outcomes, because they provide the extra help many need to overcome significant obstacles.

Pupils have a good sense of safety. Firmer support has improved attendance, although it is still below average. The school now provides a satisfactory quality of education and adequate value for money.

Leaders carefully consider a wide range of evidence and feedback on the school's performance. They have clear sight of how the school needs to improve further, in refreshing the curriculum so that pupils are better motivated to learn, and in developing consistently top class teaching which challenges all pupils to achieve well. Through their effective work over the past year, leaders at all levels have demonstrated a secure capacity to achieve further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attainment and the pace of learning and progress by:
 - clarifying teachers' explanations, questioning and feedback so that they consolidate and extend pupils' understanding
 - ensuring pupils improve their work independently.
- Refresh the curriculum to stimulate engagement and to ensure a good match with pupils' needs.
- Improve the attendance of those pupils whose low attendance puts the continuity

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of their learning at risk.

- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils' learning and progress are satisfactory and outcomes are improving quite rapidly. Children start school with skills much lower than expected for their age. Their attainment by the time they leave school is below average. Few have reached the higher levels in English, mathematics or science. However, attainment has risen in both key stages, and Year 6 is now much closer than in recent years to attaining the minimum level expected nationally. This is because of an improvement in the pace of learning. In the great majority of the lessons observed, pupils' learning was at least satisfactory, and progress and enjoyment were good in just over half. The work seen by inspectors reflects the school's own assessments, which show positive progress across the age and ability range, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has identified pockets of underperformance in younger boys' writing and older girls' mathematics and has taken effective steps to improve both. Pupils have, in general, progressed at a better rate this year than in previous years, although gains in mathematics are smaller than in English or science. The school is aware of this and accelerating progress in mathematics is a priority.

Pupils learn a great deal from the school about how to behave considerately, act responsibly and look after themselves and others. Pupils sometimes behave in an unkind way, but behaviour is well managed, and pupils' sense of safety is a strength which reflects the school's careful teaching and good care. Pupils' contribution to their school and community is satisfactory and shows emerging strengths. For example, pupils care about making their community a greener and fairer place. They talk with feeling about combating racism and injustice. Reflecting on the life of Stephen Lawrence, one pupil said, 'He's made the world a better place.'. Some have made a difference to their community, for example, by singing to disabled and older people. Outcomes in other respects, including enjoyment and achievement, are satisfactory. This is despite good care, guidance and support and many extra opportunities provided by the school and its partners. A factor limiting the impact of provision on outcomes has been low attendance. However, attendance has improved well this year, as a result of firmer use of incentives and deterrents. The school is now on track to exceed its attendance targets and show a good reduction in the number of persistent absentees.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching has improved as a result of well-focussed monitoring and professional development. As a result teachers now plan more effectively to overcome the obstacles in the way of pupils' progress. Lessons involve pupils in varied and purposeful activities which have a clear focus. Teachers make effective use of good resources, including modern technology, to engage pupils with tasks and demonstrate new skills. They pause to check pupils are making the intended steps in learning, although they do not always deal well with misunderstandings. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, indicating the next steps pupils need to take, although they do not always check this leads to improvement. In some observed lessons teachers asked great questions which consolidated and extended pupils' understanding, and motivated pupils to set themselves higher targets. However, such high challenge is not consistently found and there is scope to share good practice more widely.

The curriculum provides satisfactorily for pupils' needs, and has some good features. Boys and girls alike spoke of something they particularly enjoy in school, be it practical investigations, sociable games, reading the books they borrow or the well varied choice of clubs and activities. This helped explain why one pupil felt school was like a present to unwrap every day! The school finds effective ways to teach about health, hygiene and handling emotions. Teachers are beginning to provide opportunities for pupils to practise skills in varied and meaningful contexts. Interventions for those who make slower progress have shown positive impact. However, the school has rightly concluded that it next needs to make the curriculum more relevant and exciting and to ensure good challenge for all pupils, including the most able.

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Meadowfield is a nurturing school which lives up to its commitment to welcome all its pupils and their families. The pastoral team identifies vulnerable children early, deploys support well and involves pupils in taking responsibility for their personal targets. As far as pupils are concerned, extra care, support and guidance are always available in The Oasis, seen as a cool place which really helps them to keep calm and cope with difficulties. Well coordinated multi-agency support has had a significant impact on the attendance, behaviour, safety and progress of some vulnerable children. There have been no fixed term exclusions for two years. In classrooms, learning assistants work particularly well with teachers to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school holds regular 'learning conversations' with parents and carers, and supports pupils well as they move from one stage of education to another. It makes particular efforts to build links with families who are less keen to come to school, and this has contributed to reducing persistent absence.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The senior team has used its good range of expertise and additional support from the local authority to embed higher expectations and drive improvement well. Clearly positive progress has been made on each of the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Improved outcomes show that the school now provides satisfactory value for money. Staff are strongly committed to reaching the realistic but challenging targets which are now set for pupils' learning, and work together in teams to refine their methods. The very detailed and helpful feedback given to teachers is of real value to the school. Feedback is based on rigorous monitoring and is followed up by opportunities to learn from others and from good practice elsewhere. This has positively influenced teachers' use of assessment and the pace of pupils' learning. Leaders at all levels are far from complacent: for example, as attendance has improved, higher expectations have been set. Alert to inequality, the school has had some success in narrowing gaps in outcomes between different groups of pupils.

The school makes every effort to ensure the health and safety of its pupils and staff. Safeguarding arrangements are good. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties responsibly, for example, by listening to pupils about their safety to check the effectiveness of the school's clear guidelines. Governors support the strong and productive links the school has with other services and community groups. The

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governing body has recently been strengthened by further recruitment and training. Better informed about performance than before, it now plays a more strategic and challenging role. As the school's Leading Parent Partnership Award indicates, the school keeps in close touch with parents and carers, using regular school newsletters, enjoyable events and drop-in and outreach services. In doing so, the school has helped different groups in the local community to mix together. All groups spoken to voiced strong loyalty to their new school. At the same time, the school challenges discrimination and has awakened in pupils some respect for other races and cultures and concern for the environment.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's skills when they start in the Nursery are well below those typically expected for their age. They are well cared for. Following a thorough review, opportunities for learning have improved and assessment is more rigorous. Staff are working together to make sure activities fully meet children's needs in all the areas of learning. Adults use good resources and book-based themes to provide a stimulating variety of activities. Parents and carers are warmly encouraged to get involved to help them support their children's learning. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to encourage all children to think, predict or explain their choices. Children have begun to achieve better by the end of the Reception Year, especially in using language. This year, the great majority of children are likely to make the expected progress or better. Although outcomes are lower than the national picture, the school has begun to close the gap.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Inspectors took account of the 85 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, a fairly low response. The team also met a small number of other parents and carers. Nearly all were positive or strongly positive about all aspects of the school. A small minority had concerns about the way the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. A very small number had concerns about how the school meets their child's particular needs and a few would like to understand better how they can help their child learn. Inspectors investigated these concerns by observing the work of the school, speaking with pupils and checking records. They found that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified and supported effectively, and that the school keeps in touch regularly with parents and carers, although there is scope to provide more guidance about how parents and carers can help their child learn at home. There is occasional rough or unkind behaviour by pupils, but the way the adults deal with it in school has a generally positive effect, as pupils made clear. Inspectors spoke to a range of children, who readily identified adults they would turn to for help and had faith in the methods they used. Some explained how the school has helped them change their behaviour. This is an aspect of children's welfare which is rightly kept under close review by the school's leaders.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Meadowfield Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 85 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 453 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	53	62	31	36	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	51	60	33	39	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	44	52	38	45	3	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	44	52	39	46	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	45	53	37	44	1	1	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	39	46	46	54	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	35	55	65	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	39	46	43	51	3	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	39	44	52	6	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	38	46	54	6	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	27	58	68	2	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	44	52	37	44	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	44	52	37	44	4	5	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



18 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Meadowfield Primary School, Leeds, LS9 0EY

Thank you for your warm welcome when the inspection team visited your school. It was a pleasure talking to you, because you are so polite to visitors. I am grateful to everyone who sent us their questionnaires, too. You made it clear to us that you like the way your school looks after you, and enjoy some of the things you learn in school - and we can see why. We agree with you that the school has improved and that you are getting on better with learning. You are reaching higher levels than before, well done. Some of you are attending school much more often, which is also good news. You know how to behave well and look after yourselves, even though not everybody is considerate all the time.

There is further for the school to go. We have asked Mr Mellard and your teachers to:

- challenge you to learn really well and reach higher standards, by asking questions which get everyone thinking, explaining things clearly and checking you understand, and making sure you can improve your work by yourselves
- give you better chances to learn about things which are important and interesting to you and which get you using all the skills you need to get on in life
- keep on improving attendance.

We would like to suggest two things you can all do to help the school improve further. One is to behave responsibly and kindly at all times, so that school is a place that everybody wants to come to each day. Another is to make sure you have done something about the comments your teacher has written on your work.

With best wishes to you all for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Susan Bowles

Her Majesty's Inspector

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