Inspection of a good school: The Meadows Primary School

Harlech Road, Oswestry, Shropshire SY11 2EA

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 November 2022

Outcome

The Meadows Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love coming to The Meadows Primary School. There is a strong team spirit here, summed up in the school's tagline 'Play Together, Learn Together, Achieve Together'. Pupils behave really well and bullying is rare. Pupils are kind, caring and look after each other. They know if they have any problems, staff will help sort it out.

Leaders have high aspirations for all pupils. They have recently revised the curriculum to make sure pupils learn and remember more over time. A love of reading is woven through the school and pupils learn to read from the start. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported exceptionally well because leaders make sure they get the help they need.

Pupils take pride in their school. They learn how to look after their physical and emotional health as well as helping in the community. Clubs, trips and visitors contribute strongly to their personal development. Parents are very positive about the school and say that staff go 'above and beyond'. They really value the help and support their children receive.

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

Leaders have designed the curriculum so that it is broad and ambitious. They have worked with subject leaders to clearly identify the knowledge, skills and important vocabulary that pupils need to know and remember.

In most subjects, such as mathematics, teachers have received high-quality training, so they know how to teach these subjects well. Teachers pick up on misconceptions quickly, adapt lessons and provide extra help when needed. This means that outcomes are improving rapidly as a result. However, in a few subjects, subject leaders are new and have not been able to check precisely what pupils have learned in their subjects. They have introduced new assessment processes but these are not used consistently by all teachers. This means pupils' learning does not always build on what they already know.

Leaders have prioritised early reading and made sure that staff are well trained. Pupils quickly learn the sounds that letters represent. The books they read match the sounds they are learning. This means that almost all pupils become fluent readers quickly. Pupils who need support, benefit from extra help provided by highly skilled staff. This enables them to catch up quickly. Pupils are keen readers. They enjoy telling stories using creative props in story suitcases, as well as sharing books with their buddies on the playground.

Pupils love learning together in the early years. They share resources, solve number puzzles and make obstacle courses in the attractive outdoor space. Clear routines mean that they settle into school happily. Staff work as a team and know the pupils well.

Pupils with SEND are supported very well indeed. The special educational needs coordinator is passionate about getting pupils the help they need. Staff are highly skilled. They make sure all pupils are included in all lessons to ensure that they access a broad curriculum alongside their classmates where possible.

Pupils are friendly and courteous. They take pride in their school and their work. They collaborate well and play happily during unstructured times. There is no low-level disruption during lessons. They attend regularly and there are clear routines in place to support the few families who need help to get their children to school.

Leaders have created an enrichment curriculum that provides pupils with a wide range of opportunities to learn important life skills, such as money management, self-esteem and coping with tough times. There is a wide range of clubs, such as football, craft and cookery. Many pupils learn a musical instrument and benefit from free lessons provided by a local music charity.

Staff are proud to work at this school. They feel listened to by leaders, who consult them on how to improve their workload.

Governors know the school really well. They have changed the way they work, and this means all governors play an active role in working with leaders to make sure the school continues to improve.

Parents are exceptionally positive about the school and say that their children are happy, safe and making good progress here.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

A core team of designated safeguarding leads work together closely to monitor cases and check that actions are being taken quickly to keep pupils safe. They have introduced a new monitoring system that helps everyone stay informed efficiently. Staff are well trained and know what to do if they have any concerns.

Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, including an age-appropriate understanding of boundaries in relationships. They have regular e-safety lessons, so they know how to keep themselves safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have reviewed the curriculum. Some subject leaders have not yet had the opportunity to monitor the impact of these changes fully. This means that they sometimes lack a detailed understanding about how well pupils are learning important knowledge. Therefore, they are not able to challenge and support the work of their colleagues as much as they could. Leaders should further support subject leaders to monitor their subjects effectively.
- Approaches to assessment are inconsistent in a few subjects. This means that the way teachers check how pupils acquire knowledge and skills varies. Therefore, pupils' learning does not always build on what they already know. Leaders should ensure that assessment is used consistently in helping teachers identify next steps for pupils in these subjects.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2012.

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' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	123452
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10212440
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	277
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jan Herman Kuiper
Headteacher	Karen Morris
Website	www.meadows.shropshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There is a breakfast club and an after-school club managed by school staff.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector carried out this ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and subject leaders.
- The inspector carried out deep dives into early reading, mathematics and history. The inspector visited lessons, spoke to subject leaders and staff and met with pupils. She looked at a range of curriculum documents, including plans and pupils' books and folders. The inspector also listened to pupils read with familiar adults.
- The inspector also met representatives of the governing body and the school improvement adviser from Shropshire local authority.

- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and the views of staff recorded in Ofsted's online survey. She also met parents after school in the playground.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of safeguarding documentation, including the school's single central record. She spoke to the designated safeguarding leads and pastoral lead.
- The inspector met with the school council and spoke to pupils during lessons and during lunch and breaktimes.
- The inspector visited the school's breakfast club and after-school provision managed by the school.

Inspection team

Johanne Clifton, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector

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