

Inspection of a good school: Meadow Vale Primary School

Moordale Avenue, Bracknell, Berkshire RG42 1SY

Inspection dates:

15–16 October 2019

Outcome

Meadow Vale Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Meadow Vale is a large, vibrant school. Pupils feel valued and are known as individuals by the staff. They know that there are adults that they can speak to and ask for help if they need it. Many pupils have welcomed the changes the new headteacher has put in place. They believe that behaviour, communication and learning have improved. Pupils enjoy being at Meadow Vale because they feel safe and happy.

Pupils are well looked after because all staff care deeply about them. Staff have high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond to these. Pupils behave well in and around the school and report that if inappropriate behaviour or bullying does occur, adults in the school deal with it quickly.

Pupils enjoy the lessons that teachers plan for them. They learn and achieve well. This is because most lessons interest pupils and are well taught. Pupils appreciate the ordered, well-equipped environment they have around them.

Pupils have lots of opportunities to take on responsibilities and take part in extracurricular events and trips. Pupils feel confident as they approach the end of their time at Meadow Vale, although they are sad that they have to leave.

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

Senior leaders have prioritised English and mathematics across the school over the past year. These subjects are led by enthusiastic and knowledgeable leaders. Leaders have sought outside support where necessary.

Across the school, pupils are enthusiastic about reading and sharing stories. Leaders have invested in providing good-quality books and a structured reading programme for pupils of all abilities. This is proving very popular. Pupils, particularly those in the upper years, appreciate the challenge this gives them. Younger children enjoy adults reading to them. They can excitedly retell several stories that they have heard.

At the end of early years and during key stage 1 most pupils reach the expected standard in phonics and reading. However, phonics teaching is not equally strong across all the classes. Leaders are aware of this and are giving support to those teachers who require it.

The curriculum links knowledge from different subject areas so that pupils can make connections. However, in some lessons, pupils do not gain deep subject-specific knowledge and skills. The tasks that teachers set them do not always require pupils to apply subject knowledge and skills. Leaders are organising training to help teachers plan and teach in a way that is appropriate for the subject they are teaching.

Leaders have ensured that the mathematics curriculum is well defined and follows a clear structure. Pupils were able to explain how a lesson in fractions built on their learning in Year 5. They were aware that they were building on what they could remember and refreshing it.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. Pupils are kind and caring towards each other and focus on their learning. Minor disruptions in lessons are dealt with quickly and sensitively. Teachers make good use of teaching assistants. They sensitively support a range of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Lessons are well adapted to allow all pupils with SEND to succeed. Staff in the provisions specifically for pupils with SEND ensure that learning is at the right level for the pupils and they are involved in the whole school when appropriate.

Staff at Meadow Vale are passionate about teaching and supporting the pupils in the school. They want the best for the pupils and have embraced the changes over the past two years. However, some feel that the necessary speed of improvement has sometimes led to too much extra work. Some staff feel that they need more support from leaders. Senior leaders are aware of these issues. They are confident that the new staffing structure will lead to greater support being available as they further establish the recent changes.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff take pupils welfare and safety seriously. Staff are well trained to quickly identify pupils who are at risk of harm or need early help. Designated safeguarding leaders make timely referrals. All staff involved work closely with outside agencies to meet the needs of vulnerable pupils.

Pupils feel safe in school and state that there are adults they can talk to if they are worried or concerned about anything. Adults help pupils to look after themselves by sensitively teaching them to stay safe in the community and online.

Leaders ensure that all safeguarding processes and procedures meet requirements.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is much improved and provides pupils with well-sequenced learning. However, the end points for some subjects are not clearly defined. As a result, the teaching of subject-specific knowledge is not consistent across the school and pupils are not always enabled to develop the knowledge and skills they need. Subject leaders should maintain their focus on providing staff with high-quality professional development to ensure that all subjects are taught to an equally high standard.
- Senior leaders have rapidly and systematically raised expectations across the school and addressed weaknesses effectively. However, they now need to embed further the recently introduced extended leadership structure to devolve leadership of some areas further. This will help ensure that all staff have a good understanding of the reasons for change and feel supported in their roles and with their workload.
- Leaders need to ensure that the strong practice in the teaching of phonics, evident in most classes, is more consistent across the school.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged Meadow Vale Primary School to be good on 24–25 May 2011.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	109942
Local authority	Bracknell Forest
Inspection number	10111339
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	642
Appropriate authority	Bracknell Forest
Chair of governing body	Richard Stok
Headteacher	Catherine Forrester
Website	www.meadowvaleprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 March 2016

Information about this school

- Meadow Vale Primary School is a larger than average-sized primary school. It has two specially resourced provisions for pupils with SEND. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is above the national average and the proportion of pupils who receive SEN support is below the national average.
- The current headteacher joined the school in September 2018. The senior leadership team consists of the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and school business manager.
- The staffing structure and leadership roles were recently reorganised and changes were introduced in September 2019.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors carefully considered three subjects across the school: reading, mathematics and history.
- Inspectors visited lessons in every year group, some jointly with leaders. They looked at books with leaders and pupils, they spoke to pupils they saw in lessons and they discussed the content and teaching of the curriculum with leaders at all levels and with teachers.

- In addition, meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, the SENCo, the school business manager, teaching assistants and midday supervisors.
- Inspectors talked to pupils on the playground at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors met with three members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Several documents were scrutinised, including records relating to behaviour and attendance and safeguarding information.
- Inspectors took account of the 75 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, including 49 written comments. They took account of a telephone conversation and they also met informally with parents.
- Inspectors took account of the 43 responses to the Ofsted staff survey.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and met with groups of pupils and took account of their views.
- During many of these activities inspectors spoke to pupils and staff about the culture of safeguarding in the school and whether they felt safe and cared for. Inspectors checked that all safeguarding documentation was complete, up to date and regularly checked. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about their work with outside agencies to support pupils and families.

Inspection team

Tracy Good, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Hilary Goddard

Ofsted Inspector

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