

# Inspection of a good school: Meadgate Primary School

Mascalls Way, Great Baddow, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 7NS

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Inspection dates:

14 and 15 December 2022

## Outcome

Meadgate Primary School continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love being part of the Meadgate Primary School 'family'. The school is a warm and welcoming community. Pupils enjoy coming to school to learn and be with their friends.

Pupils look after each other, including the youngest children in the Reception Year. Staff take any issues, such as the rare incidents of bullying, very seriously. These incidents are dealt with effectively so they do not reoccur. This means pupils feel happy and safe. Pupils get along really well and respect each other's differences. Learning in class is rarely disrupted as pupils focus intently on their studies. Parents are incredibly supportive of the school and how well adults look after their children.

Pupils really enjoy reading. They relish taking part in the school's reading challenges and many are 'reading ambassadors'. Pupils talk excitedly about the wide range of different books they have read. Older pupils help younger children with their reading. Reading is at the heart of school life.

A number of experiences complement the school's excellent curriculum. Trips to a science centre, for example, help pupils remember what they have learned. Pupils talk with excitement about the places they have been, for example visiting a castle or the local theatre to watch a pantomime.

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

An ambitious, intelligently designed and well-planned curriculum sits at the heart of Meadgate Primary School. It starts from the moment children enter the school and covers a range of different subjects. Children in the Reception Year access appropriate learning activities that skilfully ready them for Year 1. By Year 6, pupils are confident learners who have a wide range of knowledge and understanding.

In each subject, leaders clearly outline the key knowledge that they want pupils to gain. This is ordered logically so pupils build their knowledge as they move through the school. Leaders' curriculum maps identify where subjects and knowledge overlap. Teachers use these opportunities to remind pupils what they have learned. This helps pupils remember their learning and make connections between subjects. For instance, when learning about inventors in history, pupils linked their understanding of history to their science knowledge to explain the properties of tyres.

Leaders support all teachers to effectively develop and enhance their subject knowledge. Teachers know their pupils and subjects very well. As a result, teachers adapt well-chosen learning activities to get the best out of pupils. Teachers' checks in class help them to quickly spot gaps in pupils' understanding. Teachers then competently adjust lessons to stop pupils falling behind.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum works well to support all pupils' learning, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Careful changes are made to lessons or the curriculum to enable pupils with SEND to make good progress. No matter what year group or subject, consistent, high-quality teaching helps all pupils to make the best possible progress.

Reading is prioritised so that when children arrive in the Reception Year, they quickly learn their letters and sounds. Well-chosen books, carefully matched to pupils' reading knowledge, enable pupils to become confident, fluent readers. Effectively trained adults ensure that pupils who find reading tricky catch up quickly. A range of books and texts enrich the curriculum. Staff share their passion for reading with pupils.

Leaders' very high expectations of pupils' behaviour are shown through pupils' positive actions in the classroom. Pupils behave exceptionally well and have excellent attitudes to their schoolwork. Pupils enjoy their learning, working closely with adults if they need help. Pupils are resilient learners, and do not give up if they find something, like a tricky mathematics problem, difficult. If pupils find school life hard, there is a range of people who can help or listen to their worries. Pupils are well looked after.

There is a high-quality personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. Pupils learn a range of topics, like how to form healthy relationships or how to keep safe in the community. Leaders promote inclusivity well. Pupils learn about other cultures that are different to their own. In addition, leaders ensure that all pupils, regardless of background, get to take part in the range of trips and other experiences on offer.

Leaders, governors, trustees and staff work as a tight-knit team, and pupils are at the centre of the school's work. Leaders regularly check on the workload and well-being of their staff. As a result, staff are well supported by leaders.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is taken seriously and staff know it is everyone's responsibility to keep pupils safe. Well-trained staff record safeguarding concerns promptly and accurately on the school's safeguarding systems. Detailed safeguarding records, including clear timelines of concerns, support leaders to spot whether a pupil could be at risk from harm. Safeguarding leaders act quickly on concerns about pupils. Leaders use a range of appropriate agencies to get pupils and their families the help they may need.

Appropriate procedures, checks and systems are in place to ensure the safe recruitment of adults.

## 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2017.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	140375
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211466
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	211
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Sarah Kightley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Joseph Figg (executive headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.meadgateprimary.com">www.meadgateprimary.com</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	21 and 22 February 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The executive headteacher is also the chief executive officer of the trust.
- A head of school supports the executive headteacher in running the school.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- 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 his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils about learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- The inspector looked at a range of pupils' work across other subjects, including computing, science and art.

- The inspector held meetings with representatives from the governing body and the trust.
- The inspector met with a range of leaders, including the school's special educational needs coordinator.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector met with the school's safeguarding leader. The inspector looked closely at safeguarding systems, processes and records. He spoke to pupils, staff and governors about safeguarding.
- The inspector considered the 60 responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 58 free-text response. The inspector also considered the 28 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.
- The inspector spoke to a range of pupils over both days of inspection.

### **Inspection team**

Damian Loneragan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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