

Inspection of a good school: Kestrel Mead Primary Academy

Maidenwell Avenue, Hamilton, Leicester, Leicestershire LE5 1TG

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 April 2024

Outcome

Kestrel Mead Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Zoe Simpson. This school is part of The Mead Educational Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Sarah Ridley, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Anthony Glover.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a well-led school that encourages pupils to 'be the best that you can be'. Expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour are high. Pupils rise to these expectations. They behave well. Pupils live out the school values of respect, curiosity, resilience and compassion. Pupils feel happy and safe. Relationships are strong. Pupils know that they can talk to an adult if anything is worrying them.

Pupils reflect on their learning. For example, they are enthusiastic about their progress in physical education (PE). Pupils explain why they also enjoy religious education (RE). They say it helps them to understand their friends and the world better.

Staff take great care to meet the needs of all pupils. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school makes sure that it includes all pupils in everything that it does.

There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their wider interests. A good range of clubs is available to pupils, including cooking, dance, sports, and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) activities. Pupils relish 'Friday Flair' activities to develop their confidence.

Parents and carers hold the school in high regard. One parent, whose comment was typical of many, said, 'There is a lovely caring atmosphere, and children can be themselves.'

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

The school ensures that the curriculum is ambitious and is planned to help pupils make connections in their learning. This helps pupils to build up their knowledge over time. Teachers check how well all pupils learn. These checks help teachers to tailor their teaching of the curriculum to meet pupils' needs. The school encourages all pupils to reach the highest standards. Pupils achieve very highly in mathematics, particularly by the end of Year 6. Achievement in English is not as consistently high as that seen in mathematics.

The school keeps a close eye on the provision for and learning of pupils with SEND. The excellent support for these pupils is a distinctive feature of this school. This is evident across the school. Staff adapt their teaching effectively, for example by modelling learning, so that these pupils access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

Leaders ensure that children in the early years get off to a strong start. Staff plan and deliver purposeful learning activities. For example, children enjoy creating bouquets of flowers. They are happy to play, work and learn together. Staff are skilful in knowing how much help to give and when to give it. Children learn to manage their emotions and to become independent. Children are prepared well for their transition to Year 1.

The school has a well-planned and established phonics programme. Staff are quick to spot any pupils who struggle to keep up with their learning. Support is immediate for these pupils. As a result, pupils achieve success in learning to read. The school encourages a love of reading in different ways. For example, author visits help to raise interest and engagement with books and reading. Pupils are enthusiastic about reading. One pupil, typical of many said, 'In books, there are limitless opportunities!'

Mathematics is a clear strength of the school. The careful structuring of learning in this subject helps pupils to build secure knowledge. Staff link new learning with what pupils have learned previously. The school provides the right degree of challenge. As a result, pupils are confident in the tasks they undertake. They learn well. Typically, a pupil said, 'Maths lessons are good because we can all work at different levels. We're on the right track for us!'

Learning across the curriculum is not limited to the classroom. A strong offer of visits and visitors enriches learning. For example, trips to Leicester Museum and the King Richard III Visitor Centre inspire a love of history and deepen pupils' understanding of local history. Pupils benefit from opportunities to attend musical concerts and participate in choral singing.

The school places the development of pupils' character at the heart of its work. There is an emphasis on enabling pupils to find and express their voices. The school encourages all pupils to take on leadership roles. Many pupils enjoy ambassador status, serving the school in different ways. They wear their ambassador ties with pride. Some pupils serve on the primary leadership team. They help to make decisions to improve the school. Pupils are respectful of differences. They learn about and talk with maturity about the religious diversity of modern Britain.

Trustees and trust officers visit the school on a regular basis. They work with leaders and staff to help further improve the school. Staff are proud to work at the school. Most staff value leaders' concern for their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has been successful in ensuring that pupils achieve very highly in mathematics, particularly by the time they finish Year 6. The school's work in relation to pupils' achievement in English, including in reading, is yet to bring about equally high levels of achievement. The school should ensure that its work to develop further the implementation of the English curriculum enables pupils to reach those very high levels of achievement.

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 predecessor school, Kestrels' Field Primary School, to be good in March 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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	147411
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10298540
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	830
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Anthony Glover
CEO of the trust	Sarah Ridley
Headteacher	Zoe Simpson
Website	www.kestrel-tmet.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of The Mead Educational Trust.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.
- Kestrel Mead Primary Academy converted to become an academy in September 2019. When the predecessor school, Kestrels' Field Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders. The inspectors spoke with groups of staff and pupils. The lead inspector met with representatives of the academy council and the board of trustees. He also met with the CEO and trust officers.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, RE and PE. For each deep dive, the inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector listened to pupils reading with a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the lead inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around the school site.
- The lead inspector spoke with parents and carers at the school gate. He also considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and to Ofsted's survey for staff.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including school improvement plans and attendance data.

Inspection team

Martyn Skinner, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Cat Thornton

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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