

# Mead Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102322
<b>Local Authority</b>	Havering
<b>Inspection number</b>	355174
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 March 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Martin Beale

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	437
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Bishop-Olejnik
<b>Headteacher</b>	Susan Garner
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 January 2008
<b>School address</b>	Amersham Road Harold Hill Romford RM3 9JD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01708343616
<b>Fax number</b>	01708343616
<b>Email address</b>	mail@mead.havering.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They visited 32 lessons observing 17 teachers at least once, and held meetings with staff, groups of pupils, the Chair and other members of the Governing Body. Informal discussions were also held with parents and carers as they arrived with their children at the start of the day. Inspectors observed the school's work, and scrutinised assessment information, pupils' books, records of pupils' progress and improvement plans. Inspectors analysed 102 parents' and carers' questionnaires, 101 responses to the pupil survey and 33 responses to the staff questionnaire.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Is the school's action to reduce absence sufficiently robust to have maintained improvements in attendance?
- How effectively does the school support its more vulnerable pupils?
- How well do teachers use assessment to support the learning of all pupils but in particular in ensuring there is sufficient challenge for the more able?
- Is the school's recent action to improve the achievement of boys in writing having an impact?

## Information about the school

This school is well above average in size and the pupil roll is rising. The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds, although an increasing number are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average and considerably more pupils than in most schools join or leave other than at the usual times. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. The school has a 20-place provision in the 'Dolphins' class for pupils with speech and language difficulties. These pupils are taught mostly within the class, but attend main school lessons where appropriate. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Nursery and two Reception classes. The school has recently received the silver Eco Schools award and achieved Healthy Schools status.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Mead Primary School is a good school. It has been on a path of sustained improvement under the determined leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by a skilled team of leaders and an increasingly effective governing body. Pupils make good progress from their starting points. Attainment is average and rising by the end of Year 6, as reflected in rising test results since the last inspection.

- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes flourish in a richly resourced environment where adults focus sharply on basic skills and supporting their personal development, although opportunities are missed for learning to flow freely between inside and outdoors.
- Teaching is good and improving. Much teaching is skilled and interesting, which generates pace to the pupils' learning. However, pupils are not always engaged and challenged throughout lessons by skilled and targeted questioning.
- Basic skills are given careful attention, with opportunities for pupils to develop their writing in a wide range of subjects. However, opportunities for pupils to develop and consolidate their computer skills in different subjects are limited.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn quickly and make good progress because of the early identification of their difficulties and very carefully targeted support. The gap between their attainment and that of other pupils narrows by the end of Year 6.
- Given the barriers to learning for pupils in the Dolphins class, the small steps they make represent good progress particularly in their personal development and attitudes to learning. They are happy, engaged and motivated.
- Pupils are set challenging targets. Regular reviews of their progress are used to raise these where appropriate and to plan support to help pupils catch up if they are felt to be in danger of underachieving.
- The skilled team of support staff is carefully deployed to maximise its impact on learning within lessons and when pupils are withdrawn from class for targeted programmes of support.
- Pupils are made aware of how well they are doing and of the steps to take to meet their targets, but they are not always given sufficient time to respond to their teachers' marking in order to improve the quality of their work.
- The headteacher and her staff have a very clear understanding of the circumstances of pupils and their families. They use this to work relentlessly to break down any barriers to engagement and learning, including seeking the expertise of other

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agencies where needed. One prime example of the success this has brought is in improved attendance across Years 1 to 6.

- Rigorous attention is paid to safeguarding the pupils' well-being. As a result, they have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe including when using the internet.

The school has good capacity to continue on its path of sustained improvement. Its performance has improved in many key areas since the last inspection, including the pupils' achievement, attendance and the quality of teaching. This has been achieved through strong teamwork, the attention to detail and rigorous self-evaluation. Staff and governors have a very clear picture of the school's qualities and use this as a basis from which to plan action to tackle sharply defined priorities for action.

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Bring greater consistency to the quality of teaching by:
  - ensuring that teachers engage and challenge the pupils through more skilled questioning
  - planning opportunities for pupils to reflect on and respond to their teachers' marking and other feedback.
- Strengthen the curriculum by ensuring that:
  - pupils have planned opportunities to develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills across subjects
  - children in the Nursery and Reception classes have consistently planned access to learning outside that flows freely from indoors.

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

2

Pupils enjoy school and are keen to learn. They respond well to their teachers and their good behaviour contributes to the calm atmosphere in classrooms. When learning is most effective, particularly but not exclusively in the higher age groups, pupils work with interest and a determination to do well. They enjoy working in groups or discussing their ideas with each other. They are confident learners because their contributions are clearly valued by their teachers. Most pupils concentrate well in lessons, and persevere with tasks even when they find them hard. Learning is less effective and the pupils' attention can wander when tasks are undemanding or teachers do not involve them in lessons sufficiently.

Achievement is best in mathematics where Year 6 test results were well above average in 2010. Pupils, particularly boys, have made slower progress in writing, although this is changing as the contexts in which they write are more clearly defined and they are given clear guidance in small steps about how to improve.

Pupils treat each other with respect and consideration. They are thoughtful and reflective, and work and play productively together. They greatly enjoy the musical opportunities provided and are proud of the success of their choir. Their good behaviour helps to generate a harmonious environment in lessons and around the school.

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Pupils are able to discuss safety issues around the school and in the local area. They are confident that adults will deal with any problems they bring to their attention. Their understanding of how to keep healthy is enhanced by their participation in a wide range of sporting activities made possible by the expertise of partnership coaches. Pupils are proud of their roles as representatives on the school and eco councils. Their work in the community is much valued, such as helping to redesign a local park, raising funds for a children's hospice and linking with pupils in a Kenyan school to fund water development in their village.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

Learning is well planned and carefully structured, particularly in mathematics lessons across the school. Activities are based on a clear understanding of the pupils' prior learning, and teachers often share criteria with the pupils so they can see how to be more successful. Paired and group discussions are used skilfully to promote learning and to generate confidence in the pupils to share and express their ideas. Creative use is made of resources including interactive whiteboards to add interest to learning. Teachers use brisk questioning to generate pace to learning, but are less effective when they do not take time to check the pupils' understanding and draw out their ideas.

Teachers focus sharply on developing basic skills, while linking learning between subjects through a carefully planned thematic approach. The school has recently invested in mobile

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technology having recognised that pupils have insufficient opportunities to develop and apply their computer skills to support their learning. Experiences are enriched in many ways and pupils enjoy growing plants and vegetables in the school garden. Music and sport play a major part in the pupils' lives and the choir has sung recently at several local events.

Additional programmes are provided to extend the learning of pupils with particular talents, and adaptations made to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The information gained from very rigorous assessment procedures is used to target support for pupils within lessons or from specific programmes or individual tuition. Pupils in the Dolphins class are taught well in small groups organised by ability not age. They benefit from an interesting and practical curriculum. Teachers and other staff are deployed well to meet their individual needs, including in speech and language therapy.

The school provides a caring and supportive environment for pupils, particularly where circumstances make them vulnerable. The learning mentors make a considerable contribution to improving the self-esteem, behaviour and attendance of individual pupils, in part through their support for families in more challenging circumstances. Great care is taken to smooth the transfer of pupils between classes and help them to start each year with confidence. Arrangements are thoughtfully planned when pupils in the Dolphins class integrate into mainstream classes or transfer back to their home school.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is ambitious for the school and has high expectations of staff and pupils. The staff team pulls as one towards fulfilling the drive for higher achievement and breaking down any barriers that might impede the pupils' achievement. There are many examples where the performance of individual teachers has improved through the rigorous monitoring of their performance coupled with the sharing of their expertise. The success of the school's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination is reflected in the harmonious atmosphere in the school and the parity in achievement of almost all groups of pupils. ♦

The effectiveness of the governing body is good. Termly governor days provide a sharp focus for their work and enable them to gain first-hand evidence about the school's performance. They provide support in financial matters but do not always challenge school leaders regarding the quality of teaching and the achievement of the pupils. Governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements are robust, implemented rigorously by staff and

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their impact carefully evaluated. Procedures include very careful checks on staff and a regular scrutiny of the site.

Leaders and governors do much to promote greater cohesion within the school and the local community, based on their clear view of the context within which they work. Effective links have been established with schools abroad to raise the pupils' awareness of how other people live, but links with other schools nationally are at an early stage of development. The partnership between school and home is strong and productive, particularly in helping parents and carers to support their children's learning and directing them towards services available locally. The school is strongly committed to working in partnership with others, by bringing in expertise not otherwise available to extend the opportunities provided for the pupils and to support their welfare. ♦♦

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children enjoy the wide range of activities provided in each class, where they work and play happily together. They make good progress from their starting points. Most reach the goals expected for their age by the end of Reception, although only a minority exceed them. Adults work closely with individuals and groups to teach basic skills and extend their personal development. They are rigorous in safeguarding the children's well-being. Relationships are constructive and by their demeanour the children show how very safe they feel in each class.

Each classroom is well organised with attractive, stimulating and engaging activities. Opportunities for learning are broad and the children are supported well in the Nursery and through adult-led activities in Reception. Children's needs are carefully assessed and generally met well, but they have limited opportunity to have direct experience of the

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outdoor area in order to develop their physical skills. Furthermore, opportunities are missed to extend and challenge the children in Reception during activities they initiate, because adults are tied up in direct teaching of others.

The new phase leader is building on the strong legacy from previously, especially in terms of classroom layout, the use of resources and the collective drive from staff to give these young children the best of starts to their school life. The staff team works hard to develop close links with home, which accounts in part for the smooth and untroubled start the children make to their time in the classes. However, the school has been less successful in engaging parents and carers of children in Reception in seeing the importance of more regular attendance.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	2
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

A smaller proportion of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire than in most primary schools, although the level of satisfaction is above average in response to all questions. The inspection evidence supports their positive views, particularly that their children are helped to adopt a safe and healthy lifestyle, taught well and prepared well for the future. The inspection team also endorses parents' and carers' views that the school is well led and managed. Inspection evidence does not support the views of a small number of parents and carers, who believe that the school does not enable their children to make sufficient progress, take account of their views or manage behaviour effectively. Inspectors investigated these concerns through an examination of documents, discussion with staff and pupils and by taking account of the large majority of the views of parents and carers.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Mead 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 102 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 437 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	62	61	40	39	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	69	68	30	29	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	48	47	50	49	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	46	45	46	45	9	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	54	53	46	45	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	49	48	51	50	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	44	43	54	53	2	2	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)	37	36	63	62	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	42	41	55	54	4	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	48	47	46	45	7	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	42	41	51	50	7	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	49	48	49	48	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	53	52	45	44	4	4	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 all 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



4 March 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Mead Primary School, Harold Hill, RM3 9JD**

Thank you all very much for your friendliness and help when we visited your school recently. We agree with you that Mead Primary is a good and improving school. You clearly enjoy school and your teachers take good care of you and keep you safe. Your behaviour is good and we were impressed by the way you try hard to stay fit and healthy. You make a valuable contribution to the life of the school and the local area and take all of your responsibilities very seriously. You are also very aware of how to stay safe. Links with the school in Kenya are helping to broaden your horizons.

The youngest children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes. The rest of you make good progress during your time in school, learning the skills you need for the future. Most of you reach the levels expected of you by the time you leave Year 6. This is because you are taught well and have interesting things to learn. Those of you who find learning more difficult, including pupils in the Dolphins class, also make good progress because of the support you receive.

Everyone is trying hard to make the school even better. The three things in particular we have asked the teachers and other adults to do are:

- make sure that all lessons are as good as the best so that you make even better progress in your learning
- provide more opportunities for you to use computers in lessons
- make better use of the outside area in the Nursery and Reception.

You can play your part in helping the school to get even better by continuing to work hard and improving your attendance further. Well done for showing such pride in your school and in your achievements.

Yours sincerely

Martin Beale

Lead inspector

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