

Meriden Church of England Primary School

Fillongley Road, Meriden, Coventry, West Midlands CV7 7LW

Inspection dates

12–13 October 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and senior leaders provide strong leadership. The governing body provides effective support and challenge to the school.
- The school's ethos of 'Faith, Friends and Lifelong Learning' permeates everything the school does.
- Attainment is above average in writing and mathematics. Pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' attainment in reading does not match that in writing and mathematics, particularly for the most able and disadvantaged pupils. Sometimes pupils' reading books do not match their skills. This results in some pupils not making as much progress as they could.
- Pupils enjoy learning across a broad range of subjects and activities. Interesting themes, visits and visitors engage pupils and enhance learning.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this well to set high expectations of pupils.
- Pupils are safe and happy in school. They are confident, articulate individuals who respect and care for each other. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Parents and carers recognise improvements in anti-bullying teaching. Pupils are courteous, polite and behave well.
- Children in the early years make a good start to their school life and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. The school is inclusive and sensitively responds to meet the individual needs of pupils.
- Pupils attend school regularly. Pupils are proud to be members of this vibrant school community.
- Middle leaders are enthusiastic. They are having a positive impact on the school's capacity to improve further. Leaders collect a wide range of information, but are not always using this to sharply evaluate the impact of teaching on learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in reading, so that pupils' achievement in reading matches that in writing and mathematics, including for the most able and disadvantaged pupils, by:
 - sharply focusing on pupils' reading skills to ensure that they understand their next steps in learning and how they can achieve them
 - ensuring that teachers provide pupils with reading activities that build on what pupils can do.
- Further develop the skills of middle leaders in school by:
 - ensuring that senior leaders extend the skills of middle leaders so that they can evaluate the impact of teaching on learning more effectively
 - ensuring that leaders use pupil progress information to assess the effectiveness of actions taken by leaders.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and senior leadership team lead the school with a strong drive to achieve the best outcomes for pupils. This commitment has resulted in improvements in all aspects of the school's work.
- The school improvement plan, along with plans for the use of pupil premium and sports premium, is well focused on pupils' achievement and well-being. The headteacher regularly meets with staff to evaluate the progress pupils are making.
- Self-evaluation is thorough and accurate. Senior leaders know their school well. At times, leaders collate a wide range of information but do not always focus enough on succinct evaluation. This results in core priorities of improving outcomes in teaching and learning being lost in the wealth of information.
- The school's plan for the sports funding has resulted in improved teacher confidence in teaching sports, more sports being taught in school and the increased participation and success of pupils in inter-school competitions.
- The headteacher and assistant headteacher regularly check the quality of teaching. They recognise the need to extend the skills of evaluating teaching and learning to middle leaders in the school. Coaching and mentoring feedback, from middle leaders to teachers new to the profession, is not always sharply focused enough on how teaching could develop and be improved.
- Systems for the performance management of staff are robust. Staff have access to a wide range of professional development to extend and develop their teaching skills. Staff morale is high.
- The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils enjoy the creative themes teachers have developed. The first-hand experiences through visits and visitors create memorable learning moments for pupils. For example, Year 2 are knowledgeable about what they will see when they visit London this term. There is a sense of anticipation of visits among the pupils; Year 6 are currently preparing for a residential visit to an outdoor adventure centre in Wales. All the pupils in the class are attending the visit. The school makes good use of pupil premium funding to support families and ensure inclusion and equality of access to all.
- The curriculum supports the development of core skills of reading, writing and mathematics. Senior leaders and subject leaders have created more opportunities for writing in subjects such as science, religious education, history and geography. This has had a positive impact on the standards in writing.
- Music and sport enrich the curriculum and extra-curricular provision. Pupils spoke about the wide range of instruments they learn, including the steel drums.
- Leaders and managers ensure that opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development thread seamlessly through the life of the school. Pupils have a good knowledge of British values. A strong sense of democracy is developed through the curriculum, in addition to the wide range of leadership roles in schools. The head boy and head girl along with school councillors, eco club and play leaders are all proud of the leadership opportunities the school creates. Groups of pupils actively fundraise for local and national charities. Pupils celebrate differences, they show respect for each

other and have a good knowledge of other religions.

- The school works in partnership with parents and the local community. A number of parents and community members volunteer to help in the school, reading with pupils. Parents have positive views of the school and value the visibility and accessibility of senior staff.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is effective in setting a clear strategic direction for the school.
- Governors have actively responded to the previous inspection report. The governing body is well organised. Changes have been made to the governing body, with a sharper focus at meetings on scrutiny and the work of the full governing body. Training is up to date and effective.
- Governors are knowledgeable about the school and understand the needs of the local community. They are ambitious for the school. Governors are active in their link roles. They are clear on their roles and responsibilities and are effective in supporting and challenging senior leaders.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong culture of care for all pupils. Staff are vigilant, understanding that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. The focus in school is on early intervention of support for families. Training is up to date for all staff; all staff know the procedures to follow if they have a concern about a pupil. Safer recruitment checks are carried out on all staff to ensure that they are suitably qualified to work in school.
- Systems for recording safeguarding information have recently been updated. Leaders are using this information well to analyse safeguarding information and report to governors. Leaders are rigorous in following up agreed actions with professional agencies. The school site is safe and well maintained. Pupils and parents agree that pupils feel safe at school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils' achievements reflect the good teaching they receive. Teachers enthuse and motivate pupils to work hard. Positive relationships and a 'can do' approach are key factors in pupils' success.
- Teachers provide pupils with a good range of opportunities to practise basic skills in English and mathematics. Across the school, pupils have plenty of opportunities to write at length in English and in other areas of the curriculum. In mathematics, pupils learn to apply different methods of calculation; the 'five a day' mathematics questions along with a focus on times tables through 'maths passports' motivate pupils.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They are using this well to plan for learning. Questioning by teachers probes pupils' understanding, which helps pupils make links in learning. As a result, pupils are developing analytical skills and giving reasoned explanations for their ideas and viewpoints.
- Where the teaching of reading is skilful, teachers develop reading skills and promote a love of reading by providing pupils with access to a wide range of fiction and non-fiction reading materials matched to their level of ability. Where teaching is less effective, pupils struggle to read their current class reading book, so reading is not as

fluent. Consequently, these pupils do not always understand the meaning of words, phrases and the text they are reading. Some pupils show less motivation to read widely beyond school. They have not yet developed a love of reading.

- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy the themed topics; during the inspection, a Roman visitor working with Year 4 pupils captured their interest. Pupils are motivated by the visits, for example Year 5 pupils eagerly anticipate the opportunity to meet Tim Peake as part of their space project. Pupils have prepared intelligent questions, such as 'What is the life of a star?' They are inquisitive learners who want to find out more.
- Teachers mark pupils' work following the school's marking policy. Most pupils respond by answering the teachers' queries and comments in their books. There is clear evidence that most pupils use the feedback that they are given to make improvements in their learning.
- Homework extends pupils' learning well. Parents are positive about homework, with almost all parents saying that their child receives homework appropriate for their age.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have positive relationships with pupils. They work well in close partnership to make adjustments to learning to maintain progress for all learners. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well. Teaching assistants provide a good balance of support as well as opportunities for pupils to work with growing independence.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The values and vision of the school, 'Friends, Faith and Lifelong Learning', are strongly embedded into the everyday life of school.
- Pupils are articulate, confident and enjoy coming to school. They appreciate the work the school does to develop their experiences through visits and residential adventure activities. Pupils aspire to be leaders in the school.
- The school is an inclusive community where differences are celebrated; this starts when the children join the school in Nursery and Reception. For example, Nursery and Reception children explored themes of difference using a story book, 'Elmer'. Reception children showed good understanding of the story. They understood that Elmer tries to be the same as all other elephants. The children said that he didn't need to do this, he could be different. Pupils respect each other. Through thoughtful and reflective teaching throughout the school, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- British values are promoted through effective teaching. Pupils show a strong understanding of how democracy works. Pupils show a knowledge of current affairs and are able to share their views and ideas on recent events in Europe. Pupils have a good knowledge of different religions and celebrations that are important in different faiths.
- Pupils are proud to be members of their school. They are active fundraisers for local and national events. Good use is made of the school grounds to develop their awareness of how to care for their chickens and grow fruit and vegetables. Pupils enjoy the range of sports available in school; they know how to keep themselves healthy

through exercise and a balanced diet.

- Since the previous inspection, the school has introduced a new whole-school approach to the teaching of anti-bullying. As a result, pupils have an excellent understanding of what bullying is, what to do if it happens and who to tell. The school has worked actively with parents to share their work on anti-bullying and behaviour in addition to commissioning an external review of the school's anti-bullying work. Most parents say that the school manages behaviour well and staff deal effectively with bullying. The care for pupils with more complex needs is highly effective.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe; they feel safe in school. They understand how to stay safe on the internet. Pupils understand that there are secure systems in place in school to protect them.
- Pupils listen to the ideas of others and show respect for their opinions. Pupils are aspirational for the future. They are keen to secure a good job in the future, for example as a dentist, teacher, astronaut or scientist. As a result, they work hard in lessons.
- The Early Birds and Owls, before- and after-school clubs, provide a welcoming, caring place for pupils at the start and the end of the school day.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- In lessons, pupils behave well. They pay attention to the teacher and have positive attitudes to learning. On occasion when moving around school, some pupils are more excitable.
- The level of exclusions is below the national average. Pupils report that behaviour is good overall with just a few exceptions. Systems in place to support pupils with social and emotional needs are effective in helping them develop cooperation and play skills.
- Pupils' attendance is in line with the national average for primary schools. The number of pupils who are persistently absent has halved in the past year. However, the persistent absence of disadvantaged pupils remains higher than other pupils. The role of the family and community mentor has been critical in reaching out to support pupils and their families.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Historical information shows that pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2 is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2015, Year 6 pupils made at least expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Provisional key stage 2 results for 2016 show that attainment in writing, mathematics and spelling, grammar and punctuation is above the national average. However, attainment in reading is not as strong and is just in line with the provisional national average.
- At the end of key stage 1 in 2015, pupils made good progress and achieved standards above those found nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Results in 2016 show that attainment at the end of key stage 1 remains above national averages in all areas of learning.
- Pupils are making good progress in writing because the teaching of writing is effective. Scrutiny of current pupils' work across a wide range of subjects, including topic work in history and geography, shows that pupils make good progress in writing. Progress in

pupils' accuracy in spelling, writing and punctuation is rapid.

- Pupils' progress in mathematics has remained strong due to the focus leaders place on pupils developing basic skills and having opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge to solve problems and reason mathematically.
- Year 1 pupils do well in the national phonics screening check; school results are above the national average. The majority of pupils make good progress in reading. They read well and enjoy reading. For a small number of pupils, the books they are reading are not matched to their skills. Consequently, this mismatch of resources and less precise teaching is resulting in inconsistent progress for a small group of pupils. The school has a well-stocked library; pupils enjoy regular visits to the local library in Meriden.
- The most able pupils make progress in line with other pupils in school. The most able pupils currently in school are making good progress in subjects across the curriculum, including science, history and geography. This is because teachers set suitably challenging work.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide targeted support for disadvantaged pupils. Work seen in books during the inspection and school assessment information indicate that disadvantaged pupils currently in school are making progress in line with their peers. It is significant to note that the majority of disadvantaged pupils who were in Year 6 in 2016 joined the school in key stage 2. The most recent provisional results for Year 6, in 2016, show that some disadvantaged pupils did not reach the standards expected for their age.
- The progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with their peers. Since the previous inspection, the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in school increased significantly. The school is effective in adapting support to meet the needs of individual pupils in classes.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education in secondary school.

Early years provision

Good

- Children progress well from their starting points. One in two children start Nursery with levels of skill and knowledge that are broadly in line with those expected for their age; the other children have starting points below those expected for their age.
- The early years leader provides effective leadership and has an accurate picture of what has improved since the previous inspection. For example, the emphasis on activities being matched to the interests of children resulted in improved outcomes for boys in 2015, compared to 2014. In 2015, the number of children achieving a good level of development was in line with the national average.
- Learning is well structured. Children are carefully assessed in Nursery and Reception and provided with learning activities which take account of their interests and needs. Children are busy; their play is imaginative. Because the learning is well planned, children sustain their interest in activities.
- Children are excited by learning and demonstrate positive attitudes to play. Social skills are being developed through routines and high expectations by adults. Children from Nursery and Reception have opportunities to play together in the mornings. Children are encouraged to play cooperatively together. During the inspection, children from Nursery and Reception were observed constructing a marble run. They helped each

other and were keen to share ideas on how the construction, which was a metre tall, could be balanced and extended.

- Good use is made of both the indoor and the outdoor learning spaces to extend children's early writing skills through mark-making. For example, a group of five boys squealed with delight when painting with water over chalk marks on the playground outside. They sustained focused cooperative play for some time. They were fascinated to see the chalk disappear when they brushed it with water. Activities are planned carefully to ensure that early writing and mark-making engage boys and girls equally.
- Observations of children by the adults inform planning and next steps in learning. The school systems for collecting information include electronic systems and pupils' books. Assessments are accurate, and regular tracking of children enables adults to respond to the children's needs.
- Early home-school activities such as a sound walk support the transition from home to school. Activities children complete at home are celebrated in school. Relationships with both children and their parents are strong and trusting because adults in school engage well with parents.
- Children are happy, safe and well cared for. Adults take safety and welfare very seriously. Partnerships with other professionals support the transition into school for more vulnerable children. Children are well prepared for the next stage of their education in Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	104087
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	10020013

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	219
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Adam Boddison
Headteacher	Mrs Lucy Winkler
Telephone number	01676 522488
Website	www.meridenceprimaryschool.co.uk/
Email address	office@meriden.solihull.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14–15 October 2014

Information about this school

- Meriden Church of England Primary is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school has a nursery providing morning places. The school is a one-form entry school.
- The school met the government's current floor standards in 2015, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 6.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below average.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British. A very small minority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in nine lessons and parts of lesson. Two of the lesson observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors heard children read in key stage 1 and key stage 2; a number of these were joint with senior leaders.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in books in a range of subjects from the current and past academic year.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, staff, pupils and four members of the governing body. A telephone conversation took place with a local authority representative.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's website.
- Inspectors took account of 72 responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, and 37 written comments. Inspectors spoke with a number of parents on the playground.
- A range of documents were looked at, including the school's information about pupils' achievement and current progress.
- Inspectors reviewed school records on pupils' attendance, behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors also took into account 49 responses to the pupil questionnaire and 21 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Pamela Matty, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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