

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Meir Heath Academy

Golborn Avenue, Meir Heath, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST3 7JQ

Inspection dates:

3 and 4 June 2025

Outcome

Meir Heath Academy has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The principal of this school is Melanie Southern. This school is part of the St Bart's Multi-Academy 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), Lisa Sarikaya, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Johnny Anderson.

What is it like to attend this school?

Meir Heath Academy is a welcoming school where pupils are 'happy, hardworking and caring'. This motto is embodied throughout all the school's work. The school fosters an environment that is aspirational for the achievement of all. Pupils enjoy their learning and develop a broad body of knowledge across a range of subjects. They achieve well and, in many subjects, excel.

Pupils are friendly and courteous. From the Reception Year to Year 6, they are attentive in lessons. They want to do their best. Pupils from different year groups play cooperatively at playtime using the wide range of interesting equipment available. Those pupils who need help with managing their emotions receive expert support. This helps them to establish positive relationships and engage well in their learning and school life.

The school's use of technology is impressive. Pupils and staff use technology in innovative ways. The use of technology is carefully woven throughout school life. Pupils readily assume roles of responsibility. They wear their many badges to represent their roles as school councillors, bistro buddies or play detectives with pride. They say, 'We are young leaders and make good choices for our school.'

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

The curriculum is broad and balanced. It has been designed with the needs of the pupils in mind. The curriculum is well-constructed from the early years to Year 6. The school has

identified the important knowledge and vocabulary that pupils should acquire. This knowledge builds on what they already know in well-ordered steps. For example, in art and design, children in reception learn how to mix paint in order to paint pictures of mermaids. By Year 6 pupils are able to skilfully use a range of techniques using watercolours to obtain their desired effect.

Staff receive appropriate guidance to support them to deliver the curriculum effectively. In lessons they revise previous learning and carefully build new learning on this. This approach enables pupils to question and reflect on their learning well. Staff check how well pupils achieve in all subjects. This information is then used to address gaps in pupils' learning. Subject leaders ensure that the curriculum is well planned and delivered consistently. However, in a small number of subjects, the checks made on how well pupils learn are not as consistent. The school cannot be sure that misconceptions or gaps in learning have been successfully addressed in these subjects.

From the Reception Year, pupils access a well-structured phonics programme. They practise reading with books that are well matched to their phonics knowledge. Pupils receive regular opportunities to consolidate this knowledge, particularly if they are at risk of falling behind. This supports pupils to develop their reading skills and fluency as they move through the school. Pupils and parents and carers know that 'reading is the key to all learning'. Pupils read across the curriculum and enjoy sharing a common book across the school and visiting the theatre to see its production.

The school has effective systems in place to identify the additional needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Skilled staff adapt the curriculum to support pupils with SEND effectively, particularly through the use of 'voice notes' on portable devices. This ensures that pupils with SEND learn the curriculum well.

Pupils love school. As a result, attendance rates are high. The school successfully supports the very small number of pupils who do not attend regularly, enabling them to attend more often. From the Reception Year children build strong relationships and behaviour across the school is often exemplary.

The school has an extensive and thorough personal development offer that ensures that all pupils are developing the positive attitudes and life skills that will prepare them for life beyond school. Staff regularly discuss with pupils how their learning in subjects will support them in their future careers. Consequently, pupils have high aspirations and can explain how work in English could support them to be a journalist in the future. Pupils benefit from a diverse range of experiences to enhance and deepen their learning. For example, pupils can explain how a visit to a museum has enabled them to understand life as a Roman soldier.

Trustees and the local governing committee understand their roles well. Their high skill set enables them to fulfil their duties effectively. They support the school well in the 'tweaks' it needs to make to continue to be successful. Staff report that their workload is well managed, and their well-being is supported.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the school has not evaluated the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning over time. Consequently, the school cannot be sure how well pupils are learning in these subjects. The school should ensure that there are sufficient opportunities to check how well pupils are learning over time in their subjects.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Meir Heath Primary School, to be good for overall effectiveness in January 2012.

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	143350
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10344102
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	290
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Johnny Anderson
CEO of the trust	Lisa Sarikaya
Principal	Melanie Southern
Website	www.meirheathacademy.org
Dates of previous inspection	16 and 17 October 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school is part of the St Bart's Multi-Academy Trust, which consists of 23 schools.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector held meetings with the principal, assistant principals, groups of staff and pupils.

- The inspector met with representatives from the trust and local governing committee. The inspector held a meeting with the CEO and deputy CEO of the trust.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also spoke to pupils about their work.
- The inspector heard pupils in key stage one read.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- The inspector considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. He also took into consideration the online staff and pupil surveys. The inspector spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day.

Inspection team

Barry Yeadsley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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