

# Inspection of Minehead First School

Townsend Road, Minehead, Somerset TA24 5RG

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Inspection dates: 21 and 22 February 2024

|                              |                      |
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| <b>Overall effectiveness</b> | <b>Good</b>          |
| The quality of education     | <b>Good</b>          |
| Behaviour and attitudes      | <b>Good</b>          |
| Personal development         | <b>Good</b>          |
| Leadership and management    | <b>Good</b>          |
| Early years provision        | <b>Good</b>          |
| Previous inspection grade    | Requires improvement |

The headteacher of this school is Gemma Chapman. This school is part Beacon Education MAT LTD which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Robert Lakin, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Andy Giles. There is also a director of education and executive headteacher, Richard Smith, who is responsible for this school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils live up to the school's values such as community, ambition and respect. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and respectful. The school knows pupils as individuals. Pupils get high-quality pastoral care that helps address a range of needs. This is a caring and inclusive school where all are valued. As a result, pupils enjoy school and attend well.

Expectations are high. Most pupils behave well and show positive attitudes in lessons and around the school. Bullying, when it occurs, is dealt with appropriately.

Pupils have access to a wide range of extra-curricular activities that develop their talents and interests like archery, football and science clubs. Pupils are proud to take up positions of responsibility such as the sports crew, who support younger pupils in the playground. Pupils' views are represented well through the school council. Older pupils enthusiastically told inspectors about the debating competitions with other schools.

Most parents who shared their views are positive about the support their children receive at school. One comment, typical of many, was: 'I have had a fantastic experience with Minehead First School. My children feel safe and have a lovely relationship with staff.'

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

There have been some significant changes in leadership since the last inspection. The new leadership team has driven curriculum improvement at a rapid pace. Strong partnership working with the trust has ensured a clear focus on curriculum. The school has developed a curriculum that is ambitious. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn all the subjects in the national curriculum.

In most subjects, the school has ensured that the curriculum starts in the early years and is clearly sequenced. Pupils build on their knowledge each year. For example, in pre-school and Reception staff prioritise and model the use of language. This lays the foundation for pupils' educational journey. As pupils move through the school pupils use full sentences and sophisticated vocabulary to describe mathematical thinking. For example, pupils in Year 1 were discussing terms like 'addend' and 'equation'.

In a few subjects, the school has not identified the essential knowledge that pupils must know and remember. Pupils do not make connections between facts learned. For example, in history, pupils can remember key information from current topics, but struggle to link these to important concepts across historical periods.

The school prioritises early reading. Children in the early years get off to a great start. This begins from their second week of Reception. The school's phonics

programme helps pupils learn to read well. They read books that match the sounds they know, which enables them to practise becoming accurate and fluent readers. The school provides swift and targeted support for any pupils who fall behind. This enables pupils to catch-up quickly. Reading is celebrated across the school. Pupils particularly enjoy listening to their teachers reading to them. Stories are carefully chosen that reflect the diversity of modern Britain. Older pupils talk with confidence about the range of books they enjoy from the class and school libraries.

The school provides well for pupils with SEND. It operates a school-based SEND provision to support a small number of pupils. These pupils benefit from a highly tailored provision designed to meet their identified targets linked to their education health and care plans. A very small number of pupils present challenging behaviour at times. Some other pupils find this difficult. Inspectors concluded that staff manage challenging behaviour well.

The curriculum for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is well matched to pupils' age and understanding. The school supports pupils' mental health well. Pupils understand the school's 'zones of regulation' and use these to manage their own feelings and behaviour. The school's work with the church, local library and a care home enhance pupils' social development. Work with the local mayor and school council elections develop pupils' understanding of democracy.

The school has taken swift action to reduce persistent absence. It works with parents to overcome barriers that may prevent pupils from attending as often as they should. The school uses many strategies to promote high attendance, including inviting pupils to a nurture breakfast club, where they are offered a cooked breakfast once a week.

Trustees and the local governing board have an accurate view of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. They are strongly committed to improving the school further. Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel valued and supported by the school and the trust.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In some subjects and at times in the early years, the school has not identified the essential knowledge it wants pupils to know and remember over time. As a result, pupils do not develop a broad knowledge of the curriculum in these areas. The school and trust must ensure that the precise knowledge they want pupils to learn is identified so that they build on their knowledge over time.

## 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

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 142800   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Somerset   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10298049   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | First  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Academy converter  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 2 to 9   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 290  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | Board of trustees  |
| <b>Chair of trust</b>                      | Andy Giles   |
| <b>CEO of the trust</b>                    | Robert Lakin   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Gemma Chapman  |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.mineheadfirstschool.co.uk">www.mineheadfirstschool.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Dates of previous inspection</b>        | 30 June and 1 July 2021, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005               |

## Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is well above the national average.
- The headteacher took up her post in September 2023.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the headteacher, the deputy head teacher, the special educational needs coordinator, the designated safeguarding leads, members of staff, the trust chief executive officer, members of the trust leadership team and members of the trust board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited samples of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments, and the staff surveys.

### **Inspection team**

|                                   |                         |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Gavin Summerfield, lead inspector | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Matthew Shirley                   | Ofsted Inspector        |
| Lizzie Lethbridge                 | Ofsted Inspector        |

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