

Inspection of Aldermaston C.E. Primary School

Wasing Lane, Aldermaston, Reading RG7 4LX

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 May 2023

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at this village school. They enjoy the positive relationships they have with their classmates and their teachers. From the early years onwards, staff get to know them well and care about them. As a result, this school is a positive and welcoming place to be. As one parent said to inspectors, 'My children often say "I love my school."'

School life is enriched with engaging experiences. Pupils love the many clubs on offer which help them to develop their interests and confidence and to build friendships. They talk enthusiastically about the trips they go on. Highlights include their residential activity week in Wales and 'reading café on tour'. Pupils proudly take on responsibilities including school council, 'tech team' and 'eco-warriors', all of which help them to learn about leadership and how to be a good citizen. Pupils achieve well across the curriculum. They rise to leaders' high expectations for their learning.

Leaders set high standards for pupils' behaviour. All pupils understand the school rules and behave well. As a result, learning is rarely interrupted. At social times, pupils play happily together, share equipment and take turns. Any instances of bullying are dealt with swiftly by leaders.

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

Leaders have established an ambitious curriculum. They have identified the important knowledge that pupils need to learn. Leaders have carefully considered the order in which pupils learn this knowledge so that they can make sense of what comes next as they move through the school. This helps pupils to build their knowledge securely over time. This approach is consistent across every subject. Leaders are proactive in identifying pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and ensure that they are supported to learn alongside their peers. As a result, all pupils benefit from the schools' ambitious curriculum. This is having a positive impact on pupils' outcomes.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They deliver curriculum content clearly and successfully adapt activities to meet pupils' needs. Where some pupils need additional support, this is provided. Teachers ensure pupils regularly recap previous learning and check their understanding. This helps pupils to remember the important facts. As a result, pupils, including those in the early years, achieve well. However, in a small number of subjects where the curriculum is new, pupils are not always able to remember previously taught concepts and vocabulary and link this to their new learning.

Leaders have prioritised the development of pupils' reading. This starts in the early years, where there is a strong focus on developing children's language and communication skills. Leaders have implemented a systematic approach to teaching phonics. Adults are well trained in delivering the phonics programme. They quickly

identify any pupils who are falling behind and provide effective support to help them catch up. Early readers receive books matched to the sounds they know. Pupils read widely and often and particularly enjoy story time with their teachers. As a result, pupils learn to read with confidence.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. If pupils need support to manage their emotions, they receive well-considered pastoral care. Leaders have worked hard to reassert expectations to pupils and parents around good attendance. This work is having a positive impact. However, a few pupils still do not attend regularly enough and do not fully benefit from all the school has to offer.

Pupils' personal development is well considered. Leaders have created a framework of 'learning heroes', such as 'the reflector owl', that underpin how they develop pupils' character and teach them the fundamental British values of democracy, individual liberty, the rule of law and mutual respect and tolerance. Pupils understand these values and can explain what they mean. Pupils enjoy a range of trips that enhance their learning. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils recently visited a 'living rainforest' and can explain how this taught them about deforestation. The personal, social and health education programme is comprehensive. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. They particularly value studying how to stay safe online and how to spot a 'scam'. Pupils are also taught about differences and can engage, sensitively, in discussions about social issues such as racism.

This school is well led. Leaders and governors are ambitious and have set a clear vision for the school. The school includes everyone and does its best to support all pupils and families. Governors support and challenge leaders effectively. Staff are proud to work at this school and value the development opportunities they have. They say leaders are considerate of workload and care about their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils feel safe and are confident that they know who to go to for help. Leaders ensure that all staff have the relevant training to help them identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. This includes governors. Staff understand the school community, contextual safeguarding issues and know their pupils well. Staff are swift to report any concerns.

Leaders respond to safeguarding issues promptly. Detailed records are kept of any concerns, actions and outcomes. Leaders have good knowledge of local support services. They work proactively with other agencies and are tenacious in their efforts to secure the help that pupils need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, leaders have only recently determined the progression of essential concepts and vocabulary that pupils need to learn. This means that some pupils are not able to explicitly make links between previous and current learning. Subject leaders should continue with their work to embed the new curriculum to ensure pupils accumulate the necessary knowledge and skills.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	109947
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	10268283
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	117
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sam Chaventre
Headteacher	Melanie Higgs
Website	www.aldermaston.w-berks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 and 12 September 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- At the time of the inspection, the school was not using alternative provision.
- The school has a small nurture provision where pupils with SEND receive some additional support.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, staff, pupils and representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative from the local authority and the diocese.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography and music. They discussed the curriculum with subject

leaders, teachers and pupils, visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors considered 39 responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire. They also took account of the responses to the confidential staff questionnaire, as well as the views of pupils that were gathered throughout the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors viewed the school's website and policies, met with the designated safeguarding leads, spoke with pupils and staff, checked the school's records of safeguarding checks carried out on adults working at the school and spoke with governors.
- Inspectors visited the nurture provision and met with the school's special educational needs coordinator.

Inspection team

James Stuart, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Deirdre Crutchley

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023