

# Alderman Richard Hallam Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120107
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicester
<b>Inspection number</b>	358694
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 September 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kenneth Thomas

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>	665
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Veronica Bolsover
<b>Headteacher</b>	James McGowan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 November 2007
<b>School address</b>	Avebury Avenue Leicester LE4 0FQ
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<b>Email address</b>	office@aldermanrichardhallam.leicester.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed 22 teachers and saw 29 lessons. Inspectors observed three assemblies, held discussions with staff, parents, groups of pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body. They looked at pupils' books and viewed a wide range of documentation including school policies, curriculum planning, self-evaluation information, improvement planning, safeguarding and welfare arrangements, and records of pupils' progress. Questionnaires returned by 169 parents and carers, 168 pupils and 56 members of staff were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- The impact of strategies to raise attainment, particularly in English.
- The current progress of pupils to see whether it is improving and whether teaching is helping to accelerate it.
- The impact of leaders and managers all levels, their view of school strengths and weaknesses, and their capacity to drive improvement.

## Information about the school

This is a large primary school with similar numbers of boys and girls on roll. The school has an Early Years Foundation Stage that caters for Nursery and Reception aged children. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Pupils represent a wide range of ethnic groups, the largest, about one-quarter, being of Indian family background. About a half of pupils are of White British background. Almost all pupils are fluent English language speakers. Very few are in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is about average, while the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is below. The school has gained national recognition for its work in several areas including Healthy School status and the Activemark for physical education and exercise, and the I CAN award for talk in the early years, together with Environmental Management and International Schools awards.

**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?**

**3**

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

**3**

## Main findings

Alderman Richard Hallam Primary School provides a satisfactory and improving standard of education for its pupils. From the time children enter Reception, the school places a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. A calm, positive atmosphere permeates throughout. Pupils are happy, feel safe and get on very well with each other. They behave well and are willing to work hard in their lessons. Pupils take pride in the range of jobs that they carry out, such as being members of the school council. The school's promotion of community cohesion is good. It is based on a firm understanding of the school's own context. This is underpinned by good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The recognition and celebration of different cultural backgrounds, enables pupils to value themselves as members of their own community and as citizens of the United Kingdom.

Pupils' academic development is satisfactory. From entry to the nursery children make satisfactory progress overall. At the end of Year 6, standards in mathematics and science are broadly average. Inspection evidence indicates that the school is successfully tackling weaknesses in writing that have caused standards in English to decline in recent years. As a result, attainment in English in Year 6 is now comparable to that in other subjects. However, pupils make the most progress in Years 2, 5 and 6, where a higher proportion of teaching is good or better. Inconsistent teaching and learning in other years are the main reasons that progress is satisfactory rather than better. Expectations are not always high enough and teachers do not always set suitably challenging work that matches the abilities of different groups of pupils, particularly those of higher ability. Achievement overall is satisfactory, and thus the effectiveness of the school is the same.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle quickly into the day-to-day life of school and make a satisfactory start to their education. They enjoy the range of activities on offer, share toys and equipment well and cooperate with each other and adults. Staff use a range of methods to assess children as they learn and develop. However, these are not always used to ensure that children are suitably challenged in their learning. The organisation of provision does not support the development of children's basic skills, through purposeful play as well as adult-led activities, sufficiently well. While improvements are being made to the outdoor area, the curriculum has not yet been developed fully enough to enable children to learn as much as they can when exploring outside.

Although progress since the last inspection has been slowed by a total change in senior leadership, the determination of the headteacher, other leaders and staff to move the school forward is seen, for example, in the tackling of underachievement in writing. School self-evaluation, although over-generous in some instances, identifies the correct areas for improvement. Challenging targets are set and assessment information is used well to check the progress of individuals and groups of pupils including those with special

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educational needs and/or disabilities, vulnerable pupils and those learning English as an additional language. In order to further accelerate progress, all recognise the need to develop the curriculum to provide pupils with a broader range of experiences that build more closely on previous learning in each key stage. The governing body, although very supportive, is not involved enough in monitoring the school's work. Successful partnerships have been forged with parents and outside agencies that promote pupils' well-being and development very well. The school has satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

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

- Make all teaching good or better to accelerate learning and progress by:
  - ensuring that expectations of what pupils can achieve are consistently high in all lessons;
  - making full use of assessment information to plan learning activities that are appropriately challenging for all groups of pupils, particularly those capable of reaching higher levels.
- Improve provision and outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - ensuring learning activities offer sufficient challenge through effective use of accurate daily assessments;
  - strengthening opportunities for children to develop their early reading, writing and number skills throughout all their learning experiences;
  - improving the outdoor area to support the development of children's skills across all areas of learning.
- Ensure that the curriculum provides pupils with a range of experiences that build on previous learning and promotes progression in the development of knowledge and understanding.
- Improve the effectiveness of governors by ensuring that they have the skills necessary to offer challenge and support in equal measure.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Children's skills and experiences are generally consistent with those expected for their age when they start in the nursery. By the time pupils enter Year 1, standards in reading and mathematics are broadly average, while standards in writing are below. Through both Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils' academic progress is uneven but satisfactory overall. Some pupils in Years 2, 5 and 6 make good progress because more challenging teaching encourages quicker learning. A school focus on improving writing has raised standards in English, which are now comparable to those in other subjects and broadly average at the end of Year 6. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, boys and girls, and pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make similar progress. The vast majority of pupils who speak English as an additional language are fully

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bilingual. The few who are in the early stages of learning the language make good progress in developing their English because of the effective support they receive.

Pupils are considerate of each other and their good behaviour helps to make the school the calm and welcoming place it is. They demonstrate a good awareness of how to avoid risks, whether on the internet or during journeys to and from school. They understand that exercise and a balanced diet are vital to their healthy development. The school council provides a useful forum for pupils' opinions. Pupils contribute well to the school and wider community in other ways, for example by acting as playground leaders or raising money for worthwhile causes, such as Pakistan Flood Relief. Attendance although average, is adversely affected by family holidays taken in term time. The average standards in basic skills and their good collaborative abilities provide a satisfactory base for their future economic well-being.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</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>3</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?**

All lessons are characterised by good relationships between teachers and pupils. Classrooms are attractive and well resourced with a wide range of materials and equipment, including good resources for information and communication technology. In the very best lessons, pupils make good progress because learning tasks are well-planned to meet the different learning needs of every pupil. In these lessons, pupils are expected to work independently, stretching themselves and others as they talk things through.

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Pupils with particular needs also make good progress because of the effective support of teaching assistants. These lessons move forward rapidly. In some other lessons, teachers do not drive learning forward quickly enough. Tasks are not well matched to pupils' learning needs, expectations of how much will be done are too limited and the work of teaching assistants is not focused enough on supporting learning. As a result, the rate of learning slows. In most classes, the marking of pupils' work provides a clear guide to the next steps in learning. Good use is made of assessment information to identify underperformance and to track pupils' progress towards their targets.

The curriculum provides pupils with a satisfactory range of learning experiences. It is presently being reviewed to ensure that topics make more meaningful links between subjects, while providing continuity and progression in learning across the key stages. It is enhanced by a programme of visitors to the school and visits out of school, including residential visits. Pupils also benefit from a well-attended range of extra-curricular activities. The vast majority of parents and carers say that the school is very caring. This is borne out by inspection findings. Pupils are well looked after and say that the school is a safe and secure place. All adults are particularly sensitive to those pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable. Staff work hard to involve parents in their children's learning. Strenuous efforts are made to promote regular attendance, with additional support provided for those returning after periods of absence.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher provides effective leadership and is prepared to take difficult decisions. Since taking up his post he has successfully negotiated the school through a period in which there has been significant changes in school leadership. All members of the senior leadership team have been appointed since the last inspection and many other staff are newly appointed to middle leadership roles. As a result, leadership and management are more widely shared. While many staff are relatively inexperienced in terms of leadership roles, all are keen to make a full contribution to the drive for improvement. While the school benefits from the support of the governing body, governors have been too reliant on reports from the headteacher and not sufficiently involved in gathering first-hand information to challenge for school improvement.

Arrangements for safeguarding the welfare of pupils and for making sure that those working with them are properly vetted are good. Responsibilities are clear, so that the school provides a safe environment for all. The good procedures meet all statutory requirements and underpin the school's caring approach. The school is very mindful of the

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community it serves and promotes equality of opportunity satisfactorily. Appropriate measures are in place to tackle any form of discrimination. Pupils cross social, ethnic, religious and cultural boundaries very successfully, and their minds are opened to the range and diversity of culture in the United Kingdom and abroad.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<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>3</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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

When they start in nursery, most children's skills are consistent with those usually found in children of their age. They make satisfactory progress and the great majority of children achieve the early learning goals expected of them by the time they enter Year 1. Some children exceed these goals, but certain weaknesses in provision prevent more doing so. For example, opportunities to extend children's skills are sometimes missed because adults' use of questioning does not expand their thinking. Resources are not always used to stimulate learning and outdoor activities are not always sufficiently focused on learning. Leadership and management are satisfactory. This is because the Early Years Foundation Stage leader has only recently taken up the position and is in the process of evaluating the effectiveness of the provision to form a basis for planning and improvement. However, there are also some significant strengths in provision. The setting provides good-quality care which is much appreciated by parents. Close links with parents assist in the smooth transition of children into the class, and children are nurtured by staff and happy at school. As a result of these strengths, children make good progress in personal, social and emotional development.



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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

There was a good response from parents and carers to questionnaires. The responses reflect a positive relationship with most parents and carers, and the comments made reflect considerable satisfaction. Parent and carers say that staff keep their children safe and that their children enjoy school. They say that they are well informed about their children's progress and are happy with their children's experience at school. A number also rightly comment positively about the support provided for pupils who have particular needs. A very small number disagree that unacceptable behaviour is tackled effectively. Inspectors observed only good behaviour around the school at breaks and lunchtimes. They therefore asked several pupils if they felt threatened or unsafe. The pupils were unanimous that any inappropriate behaviour was quickly and fairly dealt with, and they did not feel that it caused any learning time to be lost.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Alderman Richard Hallam 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 169 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 665 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	90	53	75	44	0	0	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	96	57	68	40	1	1	2	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	63	37	86	51	10	6	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	75	44	77	46	8	5	3	2
The teaching is good at this school	80	47	78	46	5	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	64	38	84	50	11	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	65	38	92	54	5	3	2	1
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)	56	33	78	46	9	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	70	41	84	50	8	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	55	33	79	47	11	7	6	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	51	30	88	52	10	6	4	2
The school is led and managed effectively	65	38	85	50	7	4	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	88	52	72	43	3	2	3	2

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## 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.**



Wednesday 22 September 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Alderman Richard Hallam Primary School, Leicester, LE4 0FQ**

Thank you for the help you gave us with the recent inspection of your school and for the friendly way you received us. We spoke to many of you, and you were really helpful. We also want to say how much we enjoyed listening to your singing in assembly.

You receive a satisfactory education. You make satisfactory progress and reach average standards at the end of Year 6. You could reach even higher standards and we have asked your teachers to make sure that, in all of your lessons, you are really stretched, particularly those of you capable of reaching higher levels, so that you make the best progress you possibly can. We have also asked staff in the Nursery and Reception classes to provide more opportunities for children to practice and develop their skills and to increase the range of activities by making the outdoor area more exciting.

Most of you enjoy school, listen carefully to what your teachers have to say and are willing to work hard in your lessons. You understand the importance of being healthy. Most of you eat sensibly and take part in physical activities regularly. You learn to work and play well together and to help each other. Your teachers also spend a lot of time marking your work and through this give you guidance on what you have to do to take the next steps in learning. You can help yourselves to make more progress by making sure that you try hard to follow the advice you are given. Your teachers plan a good range of visits and after-school activities that broaden your experiences. To help you to make even better progress we have asked that they develop activities in ways that link more carefully with your earlier learning experiences.

Adults at school look after you well, so that you are safe and happy. Your headteacher, all the other staff and the governing body are determined to make things even better. To help this, we have asked that governors are more closely involved in checking the work of the school and how well you are doing. We think that everyone at Alderman Richard Hallam can work together to do these things and that you will want to play your part by working hard.

Yours sincerely

Dr Kenneth Thomas

Lead inspector

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