

# Alder Coppice Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103869
<b>Local Authority</b>	Dudley
<b>Inspection number</b>	355479
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 October 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Helen Morrison

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

---

<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>	449
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Simon Bodenham
<b>Headteacher</b>	Duncan Jones
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 February 2008
<b>School address</b>	The Northway Dudley DY3 3PS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 816610
<b>Fax number</b>	01384 816611
<b>Email address</b>	info@alder.dudley.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 October 2010
<b>Inspection number</b>	355479

---

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 Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

T: 0300 1234 234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. A total of 23 lessons taught by 18 teachers were seen. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, school leaders and representatives of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at: curriculum planning; data on pupils' achievement, including their current progress; documents about safeguarding; plans for improvement; pupils' work; and records of the school's own monitoring of its performance. They also analysed 142 questionnaires that were returned by parents and carers, together with 211 from pupils.

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

- The current attainment and rates of progress, particularly for boys in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 2.
- The effectiveness of teaching in securing good progress, particularly for potentially higher-attaining pupils in Key Stage 1.
- The effectiveness of promoting equality through meeting the needs of different groups of pupils.
- The impact of actions taken to improve assessment and the work of middle leaders.

## Information about the school

Alder Coppice is a larger than the average-sized primary school and most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average as is that of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a Nursery class, which provides part-time education, and two full-time Reception classes.

There have been significant changes to the leadership team this term with the internal appointment of two assistant headteachers, and two of the four phase leaders. The school has gained a number of awards including the Basic Skills Quality Mark and International Schools Award. It has National Healthy Schools Status.

**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?**

**2**

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

**2**

## Main findings

Alder Coppice Primary is a good school. Children are given a good start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage and one parent's comment is typical of many: 'My children have a wonderful time at school.' As a result of the exciting and engaging curriculum, pupils' behaviour is good, and often exemplary. Senior leaders and governors lead the school well, ensuring that all staff share their understanding of the needs of pupils and the progress they make.

The curriculum is exciting and carefully planned so that pupils' progress across the school, including that of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is good. As a result, pupils maintain their above average attainment as they move through the school. The school has worked hard to ensure that boys enjoy learning by providing a good range of practical experiences on which pupils can base their learning. For example, pupils in Year 1 learn to write instructions based on their experience of making biscuits. As a result of the emphasis on practical experiences, the gap between the attainment of boys and girls has largely closed. However, the school recognises that more able pupils are not always given sufficiently challenging work. Although Year 6 pupils made video recordings of their findings when they visited a Tudor house, information and communication technology is not used widely enough by pupils to further improve the standard of their work. Pupils regularly evaluate their own learning in lessons, although marking does not consistently tell pupils what they need to do to improve their work.

Pupils enjoy being at school because they say it is caring and welcoming. They know they will be listened to if they approach an adult with a concern and, as a result, they feel safe in school. They learn to work well together by negotiating their activities in groups and by sharing resources. They happily take on responsibilities, such as acting as prefects and monitors or as members of the school council. This, together with pupils' increasing awareness of the world of work, results in their being well prepared for the next stage of their education and later life. Pupils consider the experiences of others in their local community and in Europe, but the school recognises that it provides only limited opportunities for them to learn about the lives of other people in the United Kingdom.

The headteacher, senior leaders and the governing body have a clear vision for the future improvement of the school. Accurate school self-evaluation is based on detailed analysis of pupil performance data; this is shared with all staff so that any underachievement is quickly identified and interventions put in place to address it. As a result, the attainment of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, has risen, particularly in writing. Senior staff regularly monitor teaching, which has led to well-targeted professional development; however, examples of good and outstanding practice are not always shared sufficiently to ensure that a high enough proportion of satisfactory teaching is improved to good. Good leadership underpins the school's good capacity for

**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

sustained further improvement, and has been effective in ensuring that challenging targets for pupils' attainment have been met.

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

- Raise attainment and improve progress by ensuring that more able pupils are fully challenged in every lesson so that they reach the high standards of which they are capable.
- Increase the proportion of high quality teaching so that, by the end of the
  - 2010/11 school year, 80% of lessons are good or better through:
  - sharing current good and outstanding practice regarding the expectations of pupils and the pace at which they progress
  - extending pupils' use of information and communication technology
  - ensuring that teachers' marking provides pupils with consistently good advice on what they need to do to improve their work.
- Improve the effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion by extending pupils' understanding of the United Kingdom as a diverse community.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

Children enter the school with skills that are above those expected for their age, and make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 make good progress. Attainment of pupils at the end of Year 6 has been above the national average for the last two years and current pupils' work confirms that these standards are being maintained. Inspectors' observations show that, throughout the school, some more able pupils do not always achieve as well as they could. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because the school is quick to identify their individual needs and provide personalised support in lessons, often from highly skilled teaching assistants. Curriculum topics that interest boys, along with carefully targeted interventions and initiatives to encourage them to read and write, have largely closed the gap between boys' and girls' attainment.

Pupils are clear about what they are learning in lessons. They enjoy their work and participate eagerly in practical activities, such as measuring objects outdoors to check their estimates. Pupils share their thinking with 'talk partners' which helps to consolidate their learning, for example when they solve mathematical problems.

Pupils know the difference between right and wrong, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, although pupils are not given enough opportunities to learn about cultural diversity in the United Kingdom. They have a good understanding of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle, for example through taking regular exercise and participating in sporting activities. Pupils make a good contribution to the wider community and enjoy supporting local and national charities. Attendance is good and is an indication of how much pupils enjoy school.

**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

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<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>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<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?

Teaching is good because teachers have good subject knowledge and teaching assistants and teachers work well together as a team. High quality planning across all subjects cleverly relates learning to everyday experiences, enthusing pupils and capturing their interest. As a result, tasks are usually well matched to pupils' needs and they make good progress. However, at times work is insufficiently challenging for more able pupils so that, on these occasions, they do not make the rapid progress of which they are capable. A wide range of stimulating opportunities, clubs, visitors and visits, especially residential ones, enriches the curriculum.

The school looks after pupils well, and they and their families are well known to staff. Good induction procedures ensure that children settle in quickly. The school works effectively with a range of agencies to support pupils, especially those whose circumstances make them vulnerable, so that they are helped to achieve well.

**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

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The drive and ambition of senior leaders and the governing body has brought about good improvement since the last inspection. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The school is committed to equality of opportunity and identifies quickly the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Termly pupil progress meetings are based on the school's extensive analysis of the progress of different groups of pupils, so that any differences are addressed promptly. As a result, the gap between the attainment of boys and girls has largely closed.

The governing body holds the school to account well and fulfils its statutory duties effectively. Members of the governing body are well informed about the life of the school and its performance, and work well with senior leaders in strategic planning.

A wide range of partnerships with local schools provides good professional development for staff and offers exciting learning opportunities for pupils. Relationships with parents and carers are very positive and they are encouraged to support their children's education. As one parent commented, 'I have particularly enjoyed the opportunities to work alongside my child at school.'

The school has a good understanding of the needs of its own and neighbouring communities. As a result, pupils from different backgrounds get on well together. Through links with other countries, the school successfully promotes community cohesion at an international level. However, school leaders know that pupils' knowledge and understanding of the different cultures and beliefs elsewhere in the United Kingdom are less strong.

At the time of the inspection the school's safeguarding procedures were judged to be good and this ensures that pupils are safe in school. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, for example through teaching about road and fire safety and safe use of the internet. Risk assessments are carried out thoroughly for all school activities.

**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

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enjoy learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage, so much so that one parent commented, 'We have to drive by the school at weekends to prove the school is closed.' Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and start Year 1 with above expected standards. Their rate of progress has improved since the last inspection as a result of good teaching, coupled with a more exciting and challenging curriculum. For example, children greatly enjoyed working together on their large model dinosaur and using their mathematical skills to count its teeth. This, together with the introduction of a structured programme that links sounds and letters, has improved standards. However, progress is slower in calculation and children's standards are broadly average in this area.

The curriculum captures the children's interest and imagination, and activities are well-chosen and engaging in both the Nursery and Reception classes, for example when pupils dig for 'dinosaur bones' in the outdoor area. A wide range of exciting activities is provided from which children can choose and, as a result, their independence is promoted well. However, adults do not step in sufficiently to develop child-initiated activities and, consequently, children do not always make as much progress as they could.

The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. Children's progress is monitored very effectively and recorded carefully in their 'learning journeys'. There is close teamwork between all adults and a strong commitment to helping parents and carers support children's learning. Children are well cared for and procedures are in place to ensure that they are safeguarded effectively.



**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

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are very supportive of the school, with almost all stating that they are happy with their child's experience at Alder Coppice. The overwhelming majority that responded to the inspection questionnaire say their children enjoy school and are kept safe. Responses to all questions indicate that a higher proportion than that found nationally hold positive views about the school. A small minority of parents and carers believe that they are given insufficient information to support their child's learning. Inspectors found that the school provides good termly information about the curriculum and regular newsletters inform parents and carers about school events. However, electronic means of communicating with parents and carers are under-used.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Alder Coppice 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 142 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 449 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	98	69	42	30	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	101	71	37	26	2	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	74	52	57	40	9	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	71	50	63	44	4	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	78	55	57	40	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	72	51	52	37	12	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	68	48	63	44	10	7	0	0
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)	81	57	51	36	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	70	49	66	46	2	1	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	59	42	74	52	3	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	54	38	73	51	8	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	72	51	61	43	2	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	86	61	53	37	1	1	1	1

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.**



22 October 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Alder Coppice Primary School, Dudley, DY3 3PS**

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and showing us what you are learning. We really enjoyed talking to you, sharing your lessons and reading your questionnaires. We particularly liked the big model dinosaur made by children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We agree with you that Alder Coppice is a good school. Here are some of the reasons why.

Your teachers care for you and look after you well so you feel safe.

You behave well around the school and get on really well together.

You enjoy exciting activities and your teachers work hard to make learning fun for you, so you are actively involved.

The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get a good start to their school life.

You make good progress.

Those of you who find work difficult are given lots of support so you can keep up with your classmates.

In order that your school gets even better we have asked your headteacher, staff and the governing body to do the following.

Ensure that those of you who are capable of reaching high standards always have challenging work to do.

Make the teaching even better so that you make faster progress, by helping you to use information and communication technology more, and by helping you know what you need to do next to improve.

Make sure that you learn more about the different cultures of people who live in the United Kingdom.

All the adults in your school want you to do well. You can help them by always doing your best.

Yours sincerely

Helen Morrison

Lead inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**