

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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



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Mr Giles Caldwell
Headteacher
Alder Brook Primary Partnership Centre
Walnut Road
Winton
Salford
M30 8LE

Dear Mr Caldwell

Short inspection of Alder Brook Primary Partnership Centre

Following my visit to the school on 17 November 2015 with Doreen Davenport, Ofsted Inspector, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in September 2012.

This school continues to be good.

Leaders have been successful in strengthening the quality of education since the last inspection. Adults' expectations of what the pupils who attend Alder Brook can achieve in terms of their academic achievement and personal development have risen. This is because leaders have focused relentlessly on unlocking pupils' academic potential as a means of boosting their self-confidence and resilience. Alder Brook is moving rapidly towards becoming an outstanding school.

The school is calm and orderly, with very few incidents of poor behaviour. Pupils' personal development is strong and they are cared for well by a knowledgeable and well-informed team of staff. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exemplary because of the high priority placed on this aspect of pupils' learning by leaders. Pupils' attitudes to learning improve markedly during their stay at the school because they begin once again to experience success in their learning. Pupils are prepared well for the next steps in their education beyond Alder Brook.

Safeguarding is effective.

Systems to check the suitability of all adults who work at the school are thorough. The school's single central record of checks on adults meets requirements and is maintained with accuracy and clarity.

Pupils of Alder Brook share their entrance into the school building with pupils who attend a specialist school which occupies a separate part of the facility. Pupils' arrival and departure from school is marshalled well by staff from both schools. Leaders of Alder Brook keep records of the suitability checks on all staff of the specialist school in Alder Brook's single central record. This action contributes well to keeping children safe in school.

Pupils are safe in the school. The school's own records show that incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils spoken to feel that this is the case and that the occasional incidents of bullying are usually name calling when people fall out. Pupils say they feel safe in school because the site is secure and because teachers help them learn how to keep themselves safe. The pupils spoken to understand why some websites are blocked and could recall learning about internet safety, cyber bullying, road safety, stranger danger and the inappropriate use of drugs. The school's records show that these topics are revisited frequently to ensure that pupils who are new to the school have an appropriate understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

The school's own records show that parents feel their children are safe in school. Parents spoken to by inspectors agree with this view.

Inspection findings

- Since your appointment after the last inspection, you have focused relentlessly on ensuring that improvements in teaching lead to pupils' rapid progress in their learning and personal development. There is a shared and uncompromising drive among leaders at all levels, along with all other adults working at the school, to become outstanding.
- Leadership and governance are strong. Inspectors' discussions with you, other leaders, members of the management committee and a senior leader of the local authority, demonstrate that leaders' self-evaluation of the school is accurate. You have a strong vision for the future of the school and this is conveyed well to everyone at the school. The school's management committee holds school leaders to account for their actions fastidiously. Leaders have recognised where more needs to be done to improve the school further and a robust action plan to make the identified improvements is in place. Consequently, the school's mission to 'provide every child with the necessary tools to become successful' is realised with increasing regularity.
- Without a doubt, a cornerstone of the school's success in unlocking pupils' potential is identifying swiftly pupils' specific academic and personal needs. Leaders, teachers and other adults make effective use of all the information available to them in order to identify accurately gaps in pupils' learning and personal development. Adults know the pupils well and develop strong trusting relationships with pupils. Teachers use this knowledge to plan lessons which meet the pupils' specific needs. For

example, in Key Stage 2 English lessons, pupils were observed by inspectors to be working in pairs, as a whole group, with one-to-one support, individually and indoors and outdoors. This push to make learning relevant and interesting for all pupils is contributing significantly to strong outcomes for the vast majority of pupils.

- The leadership and management of teaching are strong. Leaders have put in place robust systems to monitor and improve the quality of teaching further. Teachers, and as a result their pupils, benefit from their observing of one another's practice and the sharing of ideas on how they can even more closely meet pupils' specific needs. Leaders have identified the need to refine and embed further teachers' feedback to pupils so that pupils master basic skills by challenging them to apply their learning in a range of contexts.
- Communication between all adults working at the school is effective in promoting rapid progress in pupils' personal development and improvements in their behaviour. Frequent communication with the parents of many pupils by the family support leader and other adults contributes significantly to improvements in the attendance of the vast majority of pupils. Leaders have identified the need to increase the effectiveness of teaching assistants further, by strengthening the link between them and teachers, so that they can have a greater impact on learning.
- Leaders make effective use of external support. Teachers and leaders have forged strong links with several other good and outstanding schools. As a result, teachers are able to share good practice with other schools. In turn, this is leading to the vast majority of pupils returning successfully to mainstream schools because they are prepared well for their next steps. This is a strong sign that the school is on track to be outstanding.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- all teaching assistants have the skills necessary to complement even more closely the work of teachers, so that they can have an even greater impact on pupils' progress
- teachers' feedback to pupils supports even more effectively pupils' mastering of basic skills, by providing additional challenges to strengthen pupils' learning.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Salford. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Drew Crawshaw
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

- We had conversations with you, other leaders, three members of the management committee, a senior leader of the local authority, teachers, parents and several pupils.
- We observed a selection of lessons across the school.
- We looked at pupils' work during our visits to classrooms. We also scrutinised samples of pupils' work, including that displayed on walls around the school.
- We observed behaviour around the school, including observing pupils as they arrived at and left school.
- We scrutinised a wide range of documentation provided by the school, including: leaders' own evaluations of the school's effectiveness; the school's development plan; information on attendance; documents used to record behaviour and safeguarding concerns; information relating to pupils' progress; the results of the school's surveys of parents' and pupils' opinions; records of leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning and of performance management; and information relating to meetings of the management committee.
- Adults and pupils were unable to access Ofsted's online survey on the day of the inspection. No parents had responded to the online survey, Parent View, at the time of the inspection.