

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



30 October 2017

Mrs Caroline Charnock  
Associate Headteacher  
Aldwyn Primary School  
Lumb Lane  
Audenshaw  
Manchester  
M34 5SF

Dear Mrs Charnock

### **Short inspection of Aldwyn Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 17 October 2017, 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 October 2013.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. At that time, inspectors asked leaders to improve the teaching of mathematics and to refine some aspects of staff appraisal. The changes to the appraisal system have been made. This system supports leaders' accurate evaluations of the quality of teaching. Governors ask leaders probing questions about the school's work and check how well leaders are steering improvements.

The teaching of mathematics in key stages 1 and 2 is now consistently strong. In 2016 and 2017 Year 6 pupils' progress was at least in line with what might be expected, given their starting points. Nationally, pupils are now expected to reach much higher standards than when the school was last inspected. Nevertheless, Year 6 pupils' attainment has been above average at both the expected and the higher standard since these changes were introduced. The proportion of Year 2 pupils who reached the expected standard in mathematics in 2017 was also above average. In view of the fact that these pupils' attainment in mathematics was below average at the end of Reception, they achieved well during key stage 1. The sample of pupils' mathematics work that I reviewed further confirms their good progress in key stages 1 and 2. There are still some weaknesses in the teaching of mathematics in the early years. This is included as part of a wider priority for improvement that leaders have identified about the school's early years provision.

By the end of Reception, the proportion of children attaining the good level of development necessary to be ready for learning in Year 1 has typically been below

average. Children's skills in communication and language, reading, writing and number have generally been weaker than in other areas of learning. However, the improvement strategies you have implemented are beginning to pay off. This year the proportion of children attaining a good level of development increased and was the highest it has been for three years. You recognise that there is still work to do to ensure consistently good achievement for children in all areas of learning.

In addition to the good improvements in mathematics, pupils in both key stages, including disadvantaged pupils, achieve well in reading and writing. This year the proportion of pupils in Year 1 who attained the required standard in phonics improved and was above average. Pupils who did not attain this standard have made rapid progress in Year 2 and use phonics effectively to read and write. By the time they leave Year 6, pupils are well prepared for secondary school. Leaders are not complacent, however, and are focused on enabling more pupils to attain greater depth in their learning.

Leaders and governors are dedicated to providing pupils with a rich and broad curriculum that prepares them for life in modern Britain. Curriculum plans, examples of pupils' work, displays and discussions with pupils and parents show that this is a living and breathing part of the school's ethos and day-to-day practice. The very positive response from parents to the online survey, all of whom said that their children are happy at school, is a telling endorsement of the school's success.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

There is a very strong commitment to safeguarding pupils. Procedures to secure the school site are good and there is a thorough system to check that staff are cleared to work with children. Regular training for staff ensures that they are well informed about their safeguarding responsibilities. Records show that staff are quick to report any concerns about pupils' welfare. These are taken seriously and followed up. You keep detailed records of any referrals to the local authority, including your communications with professional agencies and parents. You are fully aware of the safeguarding risks of poor attendance and have good strategies to investigate any persistent absence. The action that has been taken to reduce persistent absence is proving successful, although the long-term impact is still not known.

The school's website provides comprehensive information about the school's safeguarding procedures and lots of useful information for parents about how they can help keep their children safe. The spotlight you give to various aspects of safeguarding in the weekly newsletter keeps safeguarding at the forefront of parents' attention. You ensure that the curriculum educates pupils about how to keep safe. Regular e-safety sessions are provided for all year groups. Pupils learn about the dangers of drugs and alcohol, peer pressure and fake news. Moreover, there is no shying away from educating pupils about sensitive issues such as sexting, prejudice-based behaviour and hate crime.

Behaviour records provide clear detail about incidents and the action taken to address these. Racist behaviour, which is rare, is fully recorded. There are also

clearly defined categories to record other types of prejudice-based behaviour. However, while pupils say that there is occasional homophobic name-calling, there are no records of these incidents. You recognise the need to reiterate to pupils and staff the importance of identifying and reporting this type of behaviour. Strategies to prevent and tackle bullying are thorough and reflect leaders' absolute commitment to pupils' safety and well-being. The school's approach is understood by pupils and published on the school's website for parents. The pupils I spoke to said that bullying is rare and that staff are good at dealing with any issues that occur. Responses to the online parent survey were similarly positive on this matter.

## **Inspection findings**

- The warm and caring relationships created by the early years staff ensure that children feel safe and supported in their learning. Each day staff provide children with many opportunities to choose from a variety of activities and challenges indoors and outside. These enable children to make rapid progress in developing their imagination, creativity and understanding of the world. Children also make good progress in managing their behaviour, feelings and relationships because staff constantly promote and reinforce these aspects throughout the day. Children do not achieve as well in reading, writing and number. While standards of physical development are broadly average by the end of Reception, the dexterity of some children, mostly boys, is underdeveloped. This hinders some aspects of their writing.
- During the inspection, you and I looked at the quality of provision in the early years. Staff have identified that a growing number of children begin the early years with speaking and listening difficulties. Even so, there was little evidence of staff supporting or extending children's speaking and listening skills. Inside and outdoors there are designated book and number areas and areas that contain writing equipment. However, hardly any children chose to visit or use these. Importantly, staff did not integrate resources from these areas into the activities that children chose. Neither did staff consistently exploit the potential of the activities children chose to develop learning in reading, writing or number. We observed some effective teaching of phonics. However, this was not consistent for all groups. The handwriting task was not suitable or sufficiently well adapted for the children, mostly boys, who are not yet able to hold or control a pencil. The use of photographs to record children's learning is helpful and very much appreciated by parents. However, on the 'shape hunt' that we observed, learning was limited because some staff concentrated more on taking photographs than on extending children's understanding of the properties of shapes.
- Rigorous application of the new assessment procedures in 2016 accounted for the dip in Year 2 pupils' standards that year. In the most recent (2017) end of key stage 1 assessments, the proportions of pupils attaining the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics were above average. Pupils' work, the school's assessment information and the visits we made to all key stage 1 classes show that pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. During the inspection, teachers and teaching assistants provided good challenge and support for pupils' writing. Year 1 pupils composed simple sentences, paying attention to capital letters, full stops and spaces between

words. The most able pupils extended their sentences, using 'and' to link two ideas. Year 2 pupils' descriptions of models included more complex grammatical elements. Their writing demonstrated well the progress they had made over time. In both year groups, teachers' high expectations of presentation were evident, as was pupils' effective use of phonics.

- Leaders set high expectations for pupils' attendance and most pupils attend regularly. There are good procedures to promote and reward good attendance and to check on and investigate absences. However, there has been a trend of low attendance for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs over the last few years. This appears to have been stemmed. The absence of some of these pupils has been unavoidable. For the minority of pupils where this is not the case, leaders have worked closely with parents and pupils to improve things. The success of this work can be seen in this term's much-improved attendance figures for pupils in these groups. You recognise that it is still too early to be sure that these improvements will continue. As such, you rightly continue to prioritise this aspect of the school's work.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- in relation to the school's early years provision:
  - there is consistently good teaching of reading, writing and mathematics across the early years curriculum
  - children who find it difficult to control writing implements have regular and varied opportunities to develop their large and small coordination skills
  - by the end of the Reception Year, children's attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is consistently at least in line with the national average
- the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities continues to improve to equal the national average
- pupils and staff report any incidents of homophobic name-calling.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Tameside. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Margot D'Arcy  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection I met with you and the executive headteacher to discuss the school's evaluation of its work and priorities for improvement. I met with two

governors and had a telephone conversation with a representative from Thameside local authority. I reviewed a range of school documents, including those relating to safeguarding and behaviour. I considered samples of pupils' work, assessment information and displays around the school. Together we observed learning and pupils' behaviour in a number of lessons. I listened to some pupils read. I held a formal discussion with some pupils from key stage 2 and spoke to other pupils informally at breaktimes. I observed pupils' behaviour at playtime and in the dining hall. I spoke to approximately 25 parents as they brought their children to school. I took account of 53 responses to the online parent survey, including 30 written comments, an email from a parent and a recent school survey of 63 parents. There were no responses to the online pupil or staff surveys.