

# Alderman's Green Community Primary School

Aldermans Green Road, Coventry, West Midlands CV2 1PP

## Inspection dates

18–19 December 2018

| Overall effectiveness                        | Requires improvement        |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Effectiveness of leadership and management   | <b>Good</b>                 |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | <b>Requires improvement</b> |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare  | <b>Requires improvement</b> |
| Outcomes for pupils                          | <b>Requires improvement</b> |
| Early years provision                        | <b>Requires improvement</b> |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | <b>Good</b>                 |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Previously, teachers have not been supported well enough to improve their skills. As a result, the quality of teaching is not consistently good.
- Pupils' progress over time has not been good enough, especially in mathematics. Currently, some pupils are making weak progress, especially the most able and disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders provide pupils with opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. However, some pupils' knowledge of fundamental British values is limited.
- Children in the early years are happy and confident. However, some teaching does not support their learning well enough, especially that of the most able children. Teachers do not embed basic skills, so children do not make as much progress as they could.
- Pupils' attendance has risen and is now closer to the national average. Nevertheless, some pupils often miss school for no good reason.
- Teachers often fail to correct basic errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling, and pupils' poor handwriting is not improved. This inhibits pupils' progress in writing.
- Teachers now provide pupils with more opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in problem-solving and reasoning activities. However, some of these activities are confusing and do not support learning.
- Middle leaders are well established in their roles and contribute to school improvement. However, further developments are needed to ensure that pupils make better progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Some teachers do not use the school's assessment systems accurately and this limits pupils' progress.

### The school has the following strengths

- Strong senior leaders are making rapid improvements across the school.
- The local authority's support is highly effective and is helping the school to improve quickly.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive exceptional support. These pupils make strong progress socially, emotionally and academically.
- Pupils behave well and are polite and respectful.

## Full report

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

- Improve progress and attainment for all groups of pupils, especially the most able and disadvantaged pupils.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that teachers:
  - use assessment information accurately to plan work which meets pupils' learning needs
  - develop pupils' mathematical skills in problem-solving and reasoning activities more effectively
  - correct pupils' basic mistakes in grammar, punctuation and spelling so they are not repeated
  - insist that pupils form their letters and numbers accurately.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - better assessment systems are developed and used accurately by teachers
  - middle leaders are supported to develop their leadership skills further
  - leaders further develop the wider curriculum, including pupils' understanding of fundamental British values.
- Improve pupils' behaviour and personal development by:
  - ensuring attendance rates, especially for pupils who frequently miss school, continue to rise.
- Improve the early years provision by:
  - developing the quality of teaching so that children, especially the most able, make the progress of which they are capable
  - ensuring that all staff contribute effectively to assessments of what children can do, to develop an accurate overview of children's achievements
  - teachers developing children's basic skills, including number and letter formation, more effectively.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Over the past two years, the school has been through a very challenging period. There have been significant leadership and management disruptions and changes, which have limited the school's overall effectiveness. However, through this immensely difficult time, the deputy headteachers stepped up to provide interim leadership. Their strength, resilience and determination to lead the school effectively ensured that there was no further decline in the school's performance. They quickly made significant improvements, especially in areas such as safeguarding.
- The new headteacher joined the school very recently. He has swiftly gained an incisive understanding of the school's strengths and the weaknesses which need to be tackled. He has brought senior leaders together to form an exceptionally strong and highly effective team. This is enabling rapid improvements to be made in all areas of the school.
- Previously, teachers did not receive enough support to help them improve their practice. In response, the headteacher has implemented a 'nine-point plan' coaching programme. The programme encourages teachers to be highly reflective to identify where they need support and guidance. Teachers work in partnership with senior leaders, focusing on and improving aspects of their teaching. Although the programme has only recently been introduced, there is already evidence that it is helping to improve the quality of teaching. Staff very much appreciate the support and guidance they now receive.
- The leadership of special educational needs is exceptionally strong. The leader is highly qualified and experienced and takes every opportunity to further enhance her knowledge and skills. The leader has an excellent understanding of the quality of teaching for pupils with SEND across the school and monitors it closely to ensure that it is improving outcomes for pupils with SEND. There is a detailed action plan in place that precisely identifies development priorities to further enhance the highly effective teaching for pupils with SEND.
- As well as checking that the nurture and enhanced resource teaching are meeting pupils' needs, the SEND leader also ensures that pupils with SEND are fully integrated into whole-school teaching. The leader provides training and support to staff to help them understand how to meet pupils' needs in their classes. The leader has developed strong and close working relationships with external agencies to ensure that pupils receive specialist support where needed. As a result, pupils with SEND make strong progress across the school.
- The leader responsible for the pupil premium funding is relatively new to the role. However, in a very short time, this leader has grasped a strong understanding of how to maximise the use of the funding to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. The funding is used to support pupils' pastoral needs very well. For example, pupils' social and emotional well-being is supported through highly effective sessions in the nurture group. Interventions focusing on developing speech and language are also highly successful in developing pupils' communication skills. However, some poor-quality teaching means that disadvantaged pupils do not make as much progress as they

should in their academic learning. The leader has plans in place to improve this, but these plans are at an early stage of development.

- Leaders have plans in place to improve the wider curriculum, including pupils' spiritual, moral, social and emotional development. However, the implementation of these plans is at a very early stage so the impact of them on pupils' development is yet to be seen. The weaknesses in the teaching of the wider curriculum mean that pupils' understanding of fundamental British values is not fully developed. Pupils have opportunities to enhance their learning through enrichment activities such as trips and visits.
- The leader responsible for the physical education (PE) and sport premium has only recently taken full responsibility for this area. Although his plans to develop pupils' health and physical activity are at an early stage of development, the use of the funding has already led to pupils' increased participation in extracurricular activities. The PE curriculum is mapped out to ensure that pupils' physical skills are developed progressively. The leader provides teachers with guidance and support to improve their understanding of how to teach these PE skills. Consequently, pupils' health and physical activity is starting to improve across the school.
- Middle leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in their subject areas. They know that teachers do not use assessment systems well enough, which means that there is not a clear overview of pupils' achievements in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders are now more involved in checking how well pupils are achieving and developing training and support for staff. However, these leaders require further support and guidance to develop their leadership skills to enable them to make more rapid improvements in their subjects.
- The guidance and intervention from the local authority has been instrumental in stemming the decline in the school's performance through a very turbulent period. For example, the local authority brokered high-quality support from a local leader of education to work alongside the co-acting headteachers. This helped to stabilise the school prior to the appointment of the new headteacher. The local authority has a strong understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and their ongoing guidance is specifically targeted to support further rapid improvements across the school.

## **Governance of the school**

- The governing body is extremely well led. The chair is very experienced and has a range of skills to ensure that the governing body fulfils its responsibility to hold the school's leaders to account for the school's performance.
- In September 2018, the committee structure of the governing body was reorganised to give a clearer focus on standards and the efficient use of resources. Governors are developing in their new roles and are now providing more challenge to check that leaders' actions are improving pupils' outcomes.
- Governors are aware of how the additional funding the school receives is used. They ask questions to check that the funding is improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.

- Governors check that safeguarding arrangements are effective.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All systems for safeguarding are fit for purpose and the vetting checks on staff are complete. Staff keep records of safeguarding cases securely and in sufficient detail. Staff are well trained in the most up-to-date safeguarding practice and leaders keep clear records of this training.
- The safeguarding team of designated safeguarding leads, behavioural and family support workers ensures that concerns and issues are dealt with well, and that pupils are kept as safe as possible. These staff are confident to challenge one another, and the culture of safeguarding has improved as a result. However, over time, there has been a lack of strategic oversight of safeguarding. The new headteacher has fully reviewed safeguarding processes and has set in train a process of improving this. The school has made much progress on this over a short period of time. For example, staff are beginning to work with parents to help them understand child sexual exploitation, and a newly appointed member of staff is further developing the curriculum for e-safety.
- Leaders for safeguarding are proactive in developing their understanding of local risks and helping pupils manage these. For example, leaders have undertaken a youth survey so that they have a deeper understanding of pupils' feelings of safety in Year 6. Leaders meet regularly with the police and other local agencies so that they can share information and expertise. Leaders respond swiftly when local incidents have the potential to make pupils feel less safe. In response to local needs and risks, leaders have identified a range of ways in which their safeguarding practice might be taken to a higher level.
- The curriculum for safeguarding is well developed and effective. Across all year groups, pupils learn about personal safety, strong relationships and personal health. Where pupils have specific vulnerabilities, teachers support them well, and make sure that this help is tailored to their needs. Over time, this ongoing focus on building pupils' resilience has had a positive effect.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good enough across the school. Where it is strong, teachers use effective questioning to check what pupils know and use this information to provide further support or challenge to move pupils' learning forward quickly.
- Some teachers do not check what pupils can do carefully enough and do not plan work which is matched pupils' learning needs or work which builds on their prior learning. This leads to some pupils finding the work either too hard or too easy and does not help pupils, especially the most able, to make strong progress. On occasion, the most able pupils have too much support, which does not help them to think for themselves, limiting the progress they make.
- Pupils across the school make less progress in mathematics than in reading and writing. Teachers ensure that pupils' basic mathematical skills, such as addition and

subtraction, are developed over time. However, teachers do not help pupils develop the more advanced skills of problem-solving and reasoning because the activities they devise are often confusing and do not support pupils' learning.

- Pupils make stronger progress in writing. They practise their writing skills in different styles, such as writing letters, stories and diary entries. However, teachers do not routinely correct basic mistakes in grammar, punctuation and spelling. This means that pupils do not make as much progress as they should.
- Not all teachers have high expectations of all pupils, including how they present their work. In some classes, pupils' letter and number formation is weak and unchallenged.
- Pupils with SEND receive effective teaching and support. Staff ensure that the transition from their individual group work to whole-class teaching is seamless. Staff understand these pupils' needs well and structure support to enable them to remain focused on their learning. Assessments of these pupils' achievements accurately identify their learning needs. Staff use this information to plan for their learning needs, which helps them to make strong progress.
- Teachers ensure that their classrooms are organised to support pupils' learning. The majority of classes provide a range of resources to support pupils' learning and pupils independently access these resources when needed.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to support pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school has a fully inclusive ethos. Staff help pupils to settle in school and engage positively in learning. Pupils appreciate this and say that 'school means family'.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes towards their learning. They are eager to learn and enthusiastically share their learning with one another and visitors. Pupils show perseverance and resilience when they find their work challenging.
- The enhanced resource area provides a calm and nurturing environment to support the additional needs of pupils with SEND. Their social and emotional welfare is exceptionally well supported. Staff ensure that pupils with SEND are fully included in the life of the school, including attending all enrichment activities.
- The nurture group is also a strength of the school. Staff understand pupils' needs exceptionally well and plan activities to enhance their mental health and well-being exceptionally well. Staff also support these pupils at lunchtimes, providing them with the opportunity to sit together and eat lunch in a supportive environment.
- All staff help pupils to understand how they can keep themselves safe, teaching pupils strategies to keep themselves safe both in and out of school, for example by using initiatives such as 'PANTS' from the NSPCC.
- Pupils understand what bullying is and say that if it does happen, teachers deal with it quickly. However, pupils feel that bullying is rare and confidently say that 'it is OK to be different'.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' attendance is just below the national average. However, too many pupils are regularly absent from school and too many arrive frequently late to school. This has been the case for the past three years. Leaders communicate their expectations for pupils' attendance well. They issue fines when appropriate and ask families not to take pupils out of school for term-time holidays. They have also put in place a range of initiatives to increase attendance and punctuality, including a walking bus, family worker and multi-agency support. However, improvements in this area have been slow to take effect and some families still choose to take children out for a holiday during term-time. Despite leaders' efforts, and in particular as a result of term-time holidays, persistent absence has remained high.
- Leaders' tracking of behaviour shows clearly that the vast majority of pupils typically behave well, but, where teaching is weak, low-level disruption often follows. In the playground, pupils play exuberantly but safely. When staff ask them to come into school, they do this sensibly and they settle to learning swiftly.
- Instances of bullying, racist and other prejudicial behaviour are rare. Leaders track these cases carefully and keep accurate records of the school's response.
- In the past, fixed-term and permanent exclusions have been above the national average. Pupils who have special educational needs have been over-represented in these exclusions. As a result of a change in the behaviour policy and leaders' keen focus on inclusion, there has been a reduction in fixed-term exclusions.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Currently, leaders do not have a precise or accurate overview of pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics in year groups other than Year 2 and Year 6. This is because teachers do not use the school's assessment systems well enough to identify what pupils can do. Leaders are currently reviewing how assessment is carried out across the school and have plans to embed a new system in the new year.
- Pupils' work in their books shows that in some year groups they are making weak progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is especially so for the most able pupils, who are not challenged sufficiently. Disadvantaged pupils in these year groups also make weak progress.
- However, in Years 2 and Year 6, pupils' books show they are making stronger progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This includes the most able and disadvantaged pupils.
- Work in pupils' books demonstrates that they learn about subjects such as geography, history and science. However, while curriculum plans are in place, there is no overview of how well pupils are achieving in these subjects.
- Pupils with SEND make stronger progress in all year groups. This is because the leader has ensured that their learning needs are clearly identified and that the right support is in place to help them be fully included in the learning. In addition to this, the

exceptionally strong social and emotional support that pupils with SEND receive enables them to engage positively with their academic learning.

- The proportion of pupils achieving the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2018 rose considerably and was broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving the required standard also rose in 2018 but was below that of other pupils nationally.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard and greater depth at the end of key stage 1 in 2018 was below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who achieved the expected standard and greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics was particularly low when compared to other pupils nationally.
- Pupils' progress at the end of key stage 2 in 2018 was just below the national average in reading. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected and higher standards in reading was below the national average.
- Pupils' progress in writing in 2018 was above the national average. The proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard was just above the national average. However, the proportion of pupils who achieved greater depth was below the national average.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics at the end of key stage 2 was well below the national average. The proportion of pupils who achieved the expected and higher standards was below the national average.

### Early years provision

### Requires improvement

- The leadership of the early years is exceptionally strong. Since his appointment in September 2018, the leader has rapidly gained an accurate overview of the strengths and weaknesses in the early years. He has high expectations and a clear vision to develop the early years. His action plans are precisely matched to the weaknesses identified, with clear timeframes for improvements to be achieved.
- The leader has quickly made improvements. For example, the outdoor learning environment has been redeveloped and staff now use it more effectively to support children's learning.
- Although staff assess children regularly, their confidence in, and accuracy of, making the assessments is not yet secure. This means that staff do not plan well enough to meet children's learning needs, which limits their progress. The leader has developed high-quality and bespoke training materials to help develop staff's understanding of this area, but these are yet to be implemented.
- The quality of teaching across the early years is not good enough. Some staff do not know when to intervene in children's learning to provide support or challenge to take their learning forward. This does not help children to make strong progress because they find some activities either too hard or too easy. On some occasions, staff do not ensure that children use the correct pencil grip to help them form numbers and letters accurately. Consequently, some children's progress in writing and mathematics is weak.



- Children's speaking and listening skills are developed well by the majority of staff. Staff engage children in conversations and model the correct use of language. Staff also encourage children to use good manners, and insist that children say 'please' and 'thank you' when appropriate. This creates a positive learning environment where children socialise well with one another. Children behave well and show respect to staff.
- Children enter the early years with skills and abilities below those typical for their age. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development was below the national average in 2018. This has been the case for a sustained period of time, including for disadvantaged children. While children make progress over their time in the early years, due to the weaknesses in the quality of teaching it is not as strong as it should be, especially for the most able children. This means children are not prepared well enough for Year 1.
- Support for children with SEND in the early years is effective and helps them to make stronger progress from their different starting points. The school uses specialist support from a speech and language therapist to develop pupils' communication skills, which helps children to make good progress in this area.
- Partnerships with parents are developing. For example, the leader has introduced workshops to help parents learn how to support their children's reading at home. The leader is developing further support and guidance for parents.
- Safeguarding is effective. Transition arrangements are in place and help children settle well into Nursery and Reception.

## School details

|                         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Unique reference number | 103638   |
| Local authority         | Coventry |
| Inspection number       | 10067149 |

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

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Type of school                      | Primary  |
| School category                     | Community  |
| Age range of pupils                 | 3 to 11  |
| Gender of pupils                    | Mixed  |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 619  |
| Appropriate authority               | The governing body   |
| Chair                               | Mrs Hayley Shortt  |
| Headteacher                         | Mr Dickon Taylor   |
| Telephone number                    | 02476688918  |
| Website                             | <a href="http://www.aldermansgreen.coventry.sch.uk">www.aldermansgreen.coventry.sch.uk</a>     |
| Email address                       | <a href="mailto:admin@aldermansgreen.coventry.sch.uk">admin@aldermansgreen.coventry.sch.uk</a> |
| Date of previous inspection         | 29–30 April 2014   |

## Information about this school

- Over the last two years, the school has faced significant challenges, particularly in leadership and management. The school has received a high level of support from the local authority. Prior to the appointment of the new headteacher, a local leader of education provided formal support to the co-acting headteachers at the time.
- Alderman's Green Primary is a larger-than-average-sized school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average. The number of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is above the national average.
- A breakfast club and an after-school club are provided for the pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups. Some of the observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher, deputy headteachers and the leader for special educational needs.
- Inspectors met with pupils, heard a selection of pupils read and observed pupils in the breakfast club, at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, assistant headteachers, the leader of special educational needs, the early years leader and leaders with subject responsibilities. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with the chair of governors. The lead inspector also met with representatives from the local authority.
- A range of pupils' books from all year groups and a range of subjects were looked at.
- Several documents were considered, including a report to governors which reviewed the school's current performance and improvement plans. Inspectors also considered information about pupils' progress, the use of additional funding, behaviour, attendance and safety.
- Inspectors took account of 39 responses on the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke to parents before school. The lead inspector also considered the views of parents in a hand-delivered letter and in an email. There were no responses to Ofsted's online pupils' questionnaire. Inspectors considered the comments made in 35 free-text responses. Inspectors reviewed the 53 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

|                               |                         |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Ann Pritchard, lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Justine Lomas                 | Ofsted Inspector        |
| Dan Owen                      | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Heather Phillips              | Her Majesty's Inspector |

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