

# Inspection of a good school: The Alton School

Danebury Avenue, Roehampton, London SW15 4PD

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Inspection dates:

16–17 October 2019

## **Outcome**

The Alton School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils come to school happily. They have respectful and warm relationships with staff. They appreciate how teachers encourage them to do well and enjoy school. Pupils know that they can always ask staff for help, both with their learning and in managing their feelings.

Pupils behave well. This is because they know what adults expect from them. Leaders and staff help pupils to understand their rights and the responsibilities that come with them. As a result, pupils know that education is valuable. They work hard in lessons and aim to do the best that they can.

Pupils feel safe here. They also learn about what they can do to stay safe, including outside of school. This includes when they go online or are using public transport. Pupils told me that bullying is not a problem. On the very rare occasions it does happen, leaders deal with it effectively.

Leaders and staff support every pupil to reach their full potential. Pupils achieve well in a range of subjects. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) who attend the resourced provision. Throughout the school, pupils work together extremely well.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Leaders and teachers want the best for all pupils. The leadership team has a very accurate understanding of the quality of education pupils receive. Leaders know that it is important that pupils' learning is well planned and sequenced. They check that subject plans are ambitious and that teachers use these plans effectively. Staff benefit from regular training to develop their expertise in teaching different subjects.

Leaders' actions mean that pupils' achievement is strong in a range of subjects. Children in the early years also achieve well. Leaders' work on mathematics, for example, has

transformed the quality of pupils' learning in this subject. Planning is clear and reflects leaders' high expectations. Teachers make sure that pupils develop a secure understanding of important concepts such as place value and number bonds. They select practical resources carefully to deepen pupils' understanding. This means that pupils have the knowledge they need to understand more complex concepts in the future.

Leaders want pupils to excel in all the subjects that they study. They know which subjects could be developed further. This is clear in leaders' plans for improvement. For instance, leaders have recently identified that they need to strengthen the way geography is planned and taught. Leaders' actions are securing improvements. However, pupils do not achieve as highly as they could in this subject.

Leaders know that many children join the school with limited experiences of reading. In the early years, teachers help children to learn phonics straight away. Leaders and staff are very clear on the sounds that they expect children to know and by when. They notice when any children fall behind, and they help them to catch up quickly. Most pupils quickly develop the phonics knowledge they need to read fluently by the start of Year 3.

In all year groups, pupils benefit from well-planned daily reading lessons. In Years 3 to 6, teachers plan activities carefully to build pupils' reading ability. Teachers are skilled at helping pupils to understand interesting and complex texts. Pupils are keen readers. They spoke enthusiastically about the books that they have enjoyed reading. They were also keen to tell me about the books that they wish to read in the future. The school encourages everyone to read together at least once a day. Pupils use this opportunity to 'get lost in a book'.

Pupils with SEND achieve well here. Staff are highly skilled in planning for pupils' needs. This is particularly the case for those pupils who attend the school's resourced provision. Staff know pupils well. They adapt subject plans so that these pupils learn and remember as much as their peers.

Leaders help all pupils to learn well and behave well, including in the early years. Pupils' positive attitudes mean that they try hard and focus on the work that their teachers provide. Leaders and staff want pupils to become responsible citizens. They teach pupils about their rights as well as the responsibilities that they have.

The school offers a wide range of clubs and extra-curricular activities to broaden pupils' horizons. These include visits to the theatre and local places of historic interest, and participation in art exhibitions. All pupils enjoy taking part in the experiences on offer.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a secure understanding of current safeguarding guidance and procedures. They act quickly to follow up on any concerns they have about pupils' welfare in line with the school's policies.

Leaders and staff are aware of local safeguarding issues. They provide pupils and families with information on different risks and how they might overcome them.

Leaders work closely with other services who support parents and carers. They make sure that pupils and families receive the right level of help and advice. Governors regularly check on safeguarding when they visit the school. They make sure that all arrangements promote pupils' welfare.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In most subjects, the curriculum is clearly sequenced and understood by the teachers who deliver it. Although geography is planned effectively, it is not delivered as well as subjects such as science and mathematics. Leaders should support teachers to improve the way that they use geography plans and, in turn, ensure that pupils acquire important geographical skills and concepts.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged The Alton School to be good in January 2017.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## **Further information**

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, ['disadvantaged pupils'](#) refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	145030
<b>Local authority</b>	Wandsworth
<b>Inspection number</b>	10124664
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	215
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The board of trustees
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Liz Stoyel
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ruth Hudson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.altonschool.org.uk">www.altonschool.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school. There is one class in each year group, including in the Reception Year. The school also offers full time nursery places for three- and four-year-old children.
- The school has additional resourced provision for 20 pupils with moderate learning difficulties and/or additional needs. Pupils who attend the provision have an education, health and care plan.
- The school became an academy in August 2017. The school is part of the Quality First Education Trust. The trust has also appointed a local governing body.
- The predecessor school, also called The Alton School, was inspected by Ofsted in January 2017 and judged to be good.

## Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteacher, executive headteacher, members of the local governing body, curriculum leaders, teachers and pupils.
- The headteacher and the deputy headteacher joined me for most inspection activities. My inspection activities included lesson visits in most classes; discussions with staff, pupils and parents; scrutiny of pupils' workbooks; scrutiny of self-evaluation

documents, curriculum plans, behaviour records, safeguarding documents and details of the provision for pupils with SEND.

- I looked in depth at reading, mathematics and science. I held discussions with senior leaders and subject leaders about their aims for these subjects. I also visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Karen Matthews, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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