

Inspection of a good school: Alexandra Junior School

Cator Road, Sydenham, London SE26 5DS

Inspection dates:

29–30 October 2019

Outcome

Alexandra Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy learning and achieve well. They are enthusiastic and motivated to find out more. Pupils can select their own level of challenge in the work and research topics that interest them. They take pride in their work. Pupils work and play well together.

The school has a strong community feel to it. The headteacher is calm and reflective, yet purposeful. All leaders follow her example and set high expectations for pupils. Pupils thrive in the warm and supportive environment. Pupils take on a range of responsibilities. They become ARC ambassadors ('Achieve, respect, care'), help in the library and run their own clubs.

Pupils behave well. Occasionally, pupils call out in class but this is because they are so keen to answer. A few pupils struggle with their behaviour but are well supported. Staff follow the routines for behaviour management so that pupils know what is expected of them. There is very little bullying. Leaders have robust systems for dealing with this. Pupils have confidence in adults to sort it out. Pupils feel safe.

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

All staff contribute to providing high-quality education for pupils. They work well in teams and ensure that there is appropriate challenge in subjects for all pupils. Support staff are astute in the way they work with pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils learn a wide range of subjects and cross-subject themes. Subject leaders plan interesting activities for pupils. They sequence the work so that it builds on what pupils know already. Teachers explain new words and make sure that pupils understand and remember content. Pupils are motivated and enthusiastic so they behave well in class.

In mathematics, teachers' approach to reasoning is well established. This means that pupils identify, discuss and debate the merits of different methods of calculation with

confidence.

Some subjects, such as history, are taught in half-term blocks, rather than throughout the year. Leaders' research has found that this gives pupils more opportunities to study in depth. Pupils said they preferred this arrangement.

Pupils are excited by history. They remember historical facts well. Pupils know the names of the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century explorers, their ships and what they discovered. However, they find it much harder to explain the big ideas behind the facts and why the voyages of exploration happened in the first place.

Teachers choose trips and visits which bring topics to life. Leaders ensure that a wide range of clubs are on offer for pupils. There are a wide variety of sports clubs and all pupils run regularly. Pupils can also apply for resources to run their own clubs, such as potato printing and jewellery making.

Leaders make reading a high priority. Staff are well trained in phonics. They assess pupils' phonics knowledge and reading comprehension when they transfer to the school in Year 3. Pupils who need it get immediate support in small groups or on a one-to-one basis to improve their reading.

Classrooms and the library have a rich range of fiction and non-fiction books for pupils to read. Teachers set up displays of texts, for example to support pupils in learning about the Romans or the Second World War. Year 6 librarians help run the library, including a story time. They rehearse and practise this to make sure that they can capture the attention and interest of younger pupils.

Leaders, including governors, are thoughtful and determined to do the right thing for pupils. There was a high response from parents and carers to Ofsted's survey. Parents were overwhelmingly supportive of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know their pupils and the local context very well. They have built effective partnerships with the local authority and external agencies. This means that pupils at risk can get the help they need. Staff are well trained. They know how to report any concerns they have about pupils. Pupils told me that they feel safe.

The local committee oversees safeguarding. It uses the support of the trust effectively and has recently reviewed the access to and security of the very large school site.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders should further develop the big ideas and themes which underpin knowledge in the foundation subjects and cross-curricular themes. Subjects should go beyond teaching a collection of facts so that pupils can explain why things happen.

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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Alexandra Junior School, to be good in November 2012.

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

Unique reference number	140080
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	10121575
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	236
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Elaine Lewin
Headteacher	Claudette Maragh
Website	www.alexandra-jun.bromley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19 April 2016

Information about this school

- The school converted to an academy in September 2013. In November 2017, the school joined the Nexus Education Schools Trust (NEST).
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.

Information about this inspection

- I held a telephone conversation with the headteacher and the senior team regarding the quality of education. Additional discussions were held on site with senior leaders.
- I focused deeply on reading, mathematics and history. I visited classes, looked at pupils' work, met with pupils and held discussions with teachers and subject leaders. I made additional visits to other subjects on the second day of the inspection.
- I met with the director of education of NEST. I held a meeting with three members of the local committee, including the chair of the committee.
- I reviewed a range of documentation, including curriculum plans and records of safeguarding and behaviour.
- Parents' views were considered through the 98 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's

online questionnaire. Staff views were considered through the 10 responses to the staff survey and through discussion with staff. Pupils' views were considered through meetings with pupils and informal discussions around the school. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Janet Hallett, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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