

Inspection of a good school: Alexander McLeod Primary School

Fuchsia Street, London SE2 0QS

Inspection dates:

30–31 October 2019

Outcome

Alexander McLeod Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Alexander McLeod is a happy place that pupils like coming to. Pupils talk confidently and positively about the school. Pupils enjoy the opportunities that the school provides for them outside of their usual lessons. Pupils also enjoy visiting places of interest. These visits are often linked to what they learn in class. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included in school life.

Pupils said that adults look after them. Adults give pupils lots of advice. Pupils said adults help to keep them safe, particularly when they use the internet.

Pupils told me that bullying happens at times but that it is dealt with well. Staff deal with any behaviour issues fairly and swiftly. Pupils' attitudes in lessons are respectful. They are attentive to adults. Pupils are kind and look after each other. They play together well. They know about the rules for behaviour and understand why they are important.

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

Leaders and staff have continued to provide a good standard of education. Leaders make the teaching of reading a high priority. In the early years, staff are careful and accurate in teaching letters and the sounds they make. This helps to develop children's early reading skills. Staff are well trained to support pupils who need extra help to catch up. Pupils study a wide range of good-quality texts. By the end of Year 1, nearly all pupils are confident readers. Staff encourage pupils of all ages to love reading. However, for some pupils with SEND and less confident readers this is not the case. This is because books that these pupils read do not match their phonic knowledge. These pupils struggle with words that they cannot read.

The early years area is a safe and caring place to learn. Children make a good start to learning in Reception. There is plenty for children to see, do, explore and talk about. Leaders have clear expectations of what pupils need to learn. Throughout the school

adults plan activities thoughtfully to support pupils' learning in reading and mathematics. There is a strong focus on communication and language. Staff are kind and encouraging. Established routines help pupils to quickly develop strong relationships and good behaviour. This means that learning is not disrupted and allows lessons to be taught well.

In mathematics, leaders have clear subject plans. Training for staff is well thought out. This helps develop teachers' strong subject knowledge. In turn, teachers use their knowledge to help pupils learn complex topics. Pupils told me that when they struggle, staff find ways to help them understand.

In history, subject plans are not as well developed as in mathematics. Curriculum leaders have made a start with identifying the knowledge that they want pupils to retain and use in their future learning. However, pupils do not remember what they have learned in previous years. Teachers' understanding of what pupils have learned in history is unclear.

Pupils with SEND achieve well. This is because work has been well planned and meets their needs. Pupils with SEND told me they enjoy their learning. These pupils are included in all subjects and all aspects of school life.

The headteacher, staff and governors work well as a team. They share high ambitions for the pupils and the school. Most parents say that they are well informed about the school's work.

Staff feel well supported. They told me that they have a voice. Leaders take staff workload seriously, and staff value this support from leaders.

Pupils' opportunities to learn about living in modern Britain are well developed. Pupils have opportunities to share and reflect on their views. Staff teach pupils to think about the needs of other people. For example, all pupils took part in the 'McLeod marathon'. They learned to raise awareness and money for their chosen charities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils' safety and well-being are of the greatest priority to leaders and staff. Leaders and staff know about potential risks to pupils' safety in the local area. Staff understand and follow the procedures for raising concerns about pupils' welfare. Leaders link with other professionals when necessary. Staff help pupils to stay safe, including when they are online. New staff receive prompt training when they join the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some lower-ability pupils in Years 1 and 2, including those with SEND, find some of the books they read too difficult. This is because they do not have reading books that match their phonic knowledge. Therefore, they do not have the opportunity to practise

their phonics skills. Leaders should ensure that teachers choose texts to match pupils' stage of reading accurately. These texts should allow pupils to practise the phonics work they have been doing in lessons.

- Teachers' planning in history places too much emphasis on overarching aims. Teachers focus too much on the individual tasks rather than planning pupils' learning carefully so that they can know more and remember more. They do not break down learning into manageable steps. As a result, some pupils cannot make connections to what they already know. The headteacher is supporting subject leaders so that they can define essential knowledge that they want pupils to remember. Leaders need to ensure that the history curriculum is carefully sequenced. Teachers need to build pupils' knowledge from topic to topic and from year to year.

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 school to be good on 26 and 27 January 2011.

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're 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	131841
Local authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	10110477
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	585
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Vaughan Williams
Headteacher	Mohammed Mustafa
Website	www.alexmcleod.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	26–27 January 2011

Information about this school

- The current headteacher took up his post in September 2019, having previously been the deputy headteacher in the school.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteacher, other members of the senior leadership team and the inclusion leader. A meeting was held with members of the governing body.
- I also had a discussion with the school improvement partner.
- The subjects considered as part of this inspection were reading, mathematics and history. In each subject, I visited lessons in different year groups, scrutinised pupils' work and held discussions with subject leaders, teachers and pupils.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, I reviewed school policies, procedures and records. I held meetings with the deputy headteacher as the designated lead for safeguarding to review examples of actions taken to keep pupils safe. I also checked staff members' understanding of how to keep pupils safe from harm.
- I observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at breaktime and lunchtime. I spoke to pupils informally when visiting lessons and in groups to gather their views on the school.

- There were no responses to Ofsted’s online pupil survey. A variety of documents and records relating to the school’s work, including behaviour and attendance information, were analysed.
- The 51 responses and free-text comments submitted to Parent View, Ofsted’s online questionnaire, were considered.
- The 34 responses to Ofsted’s staff survey were considered alongside the views of teachers gathered during meetings with me.

Inspection team

Ogugua Okolo-Angus, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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