

Inspection of a good school: Alvanley Primary School

Manley Road, Alvanley, Frodsham, Cheshire WA6 9DD

Inspection dates:

3 December 2019

Outcome

Alvanley Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They appreciate the range of clubs and other activities available to them. Pupils particularly like taking part in the many sports and competitive events. The school is in a federation with another, local school. Leaders have arranged to teach the Year 6 pupils from both schools together. These pupils told us that they enjoy the opportunity to learn and play alongside more pupils of their own age.

Positive relationships exist between pupils and staff. Pupils told us that they like the school's small size. This contributes to them feeling cared for and safe. Pupils told us that teachers deal with the rare incidents of bullying effectively and that behaviour is mostly good. They also told us that the best things about school are the teachers, their friends and school trips. These all support their learning. Pupils are polite and show respect for others. This contributes to the calm learning environment.

Leaders and teachers have high expectations for pupils. In this small school, leaders nurture and support pupils' individual talents and skills, for example the offer of additional sports or music. Leaders have created opportunities for pupils to develop a strong understanding of citizenship. This prepares pupils well for their future.

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

Leaders are ambitious for pupils. Since the previous inspection, they have introduced a broad curriculum which helps pupils to build their knowledge in a wide range of subjects. Leaders have overcome the challenges of having multiple year groups in the same class. They have successfully adapted the curriculum to meet pupils' needs and the national curriculum requirements. This is despite the challenge of having small numbers of pupils in each year group. Pupils achieve well. Their progress and attainment in national assessments in reading, writing and mathematics have improved. They are now in line with national averages at both key stages 1 and 2.

Pupils learn about diversity and equality. Several pupils enjoy learning to play the clarinet.

Pupils join in sports and musical events with other local schools. The care and support that leaders show pupils also extends to the staff. Leaders are considerate of staff's workload and well-being. They look after staff so that they enjoy working at the school.

Staff waste no time in teaching Reception-aged children to read. Children learn to recognise sounds and use these to read words. Pupils in key stage 1 learn to read simple books. Teachers make sure that reading books match the sounds which they know. Older pupils read longer and more challenging texts, including works by established authors. Pupils develop a real love of reading. They talk enthusiastically about their books. Teachers help pupils to explore how authors develop characters through effective words, speech and action. Teachers choose exciting and interesting books to read to the class. Children in the Reception class were fully involved in the retelling of 'The Wonky Donkey'.

In mathematics, teachers plan work that builds on what pupils already know. Young children develop a strong understanding of number. They learn to write these accurately. Pupils in key stage 1 use different ways to count on and add different amounts. They clearly explain what they are thinking. Pupils have lots of opportunities to use their mathematical skills to solve problems. They can explain how they have worked out their answers. When pupils find something difficult, teachers give them enough help and support.

In geography, teachers make sure that that pupils build on what they learned in previous years. Teachers help pupils to see links between what they learned before and what they are doing now. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils have learned the names of the seven continents and the world's oceans. They have a good understanding of the points of the compass and can find north, south, east and west. Older pupils recall information about the Ancient Egyptians. They can explain that the land around the River Nile appears green on a map because of flooding.

Leaders know that not all curriculum subjects are as well developed. In a few subjects, such as music and physical education (PE), learning does not always build on what pupils already know and can do. Leaders have a clear plan in place to improve this. New subject leaders have not had the opportunity to check how well pupils are learning in their subjects.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well. The special needs coordinator (SENCo) has improved the procedures for identifying pupils' needs. She works effectively with teachers to ensure that their planning and support are well matched to pupils' individual needs.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know pupils well and have clear procedures to keep them safe. The curriculum includes lessons on staying safe online as well as road and water safety.

Leaders train staff well. As a result, staff know how to spot early signs that pupils may be at risk and how to act on any concerns. This helps leaders support the few vulnerable

pupils and their families.

Pupils feel safe. They know that leaders have put security systems in place to make sure that they are safe, including on school visits.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not deliver the curriculum plans well in a minority of subjects. This means that pupils' learning does not always build on what they know and can do. Subject leaders should implement the new curriculum plans for these subjects more securely across the school.

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 Alvanley Primary School to be good on 16 September 2014.

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	111003
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10086845
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	62
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Roger Wilde
Headteacher	Viney Thapar
Website	www.alvanleyandmanleyfederatedschools.cheshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 September 2014

Information about this school

- Alvanley Village Primary School is part of a federation with Manley Village Primary School, which is in a neighbouring village. The headteacher leads both schools.
- There are three classes in Alvanley. One comprises Reception children and pupils from Year 1 and Year 2. The second class is made up of pupils from Year 3 to Year 5. The Year 6 class is based at Alvanley and comprises pupils from both schools in the federation.
- Almost all teachers are new to the school since the previous inspection, including the headteacher.

Information about this inspection

- We met with the headteacher. We held meetings with subject leaders and with the leaders for SEND and the early years. We also spoke with governors and representatives from the local authority.
- We focused deeply on reading, mathematics and geography. This involved discussions with leaders and pupils about their work. We also visited lessons in these subjects and spoke with teachers. We also looked at pupils' work.

- We scrutinised the school's recruitment checks on its staff. We spoke with staff about the school's procedures and systems for protecting pupils from risk. We also discussed how pupils are taught to keep themselves safe through the curriculum.
- We spoke with pupils both formally and informally. We listened to pupils read. We also observed their behaviour in classrooms and at lunchtime.

Inspection team

Ian Shackleton, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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