

Inspection of Alderwood Primary School

Rainham Close, Eltham, London SE9 2JH

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 October 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to Alderwood. They work hard and talk with enthusiasm about their learning. The curriculum in all subjects is ambitious and designed to help pupils remember and understand more over time. As a result, pupils produce work of a good quality in different subjects.

Pupils are respectful to adults and to each other. This is because rules and routines are clear and well understood. They learn about the importance of treating people equally. For example, pupils recently participated in the Racial Youth Justice Summit, and have learned about people who have been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Pupils understand what bullying is and, although it is rare at the school, they know that staff will act quickly to ensure it is dealt with. All pupils in Year 6 are trained as peer mediators. They understand the importance of their role and interact well with younger pupils. This makes pupils feel safe in school and in the playground, and it means that relationships between pupils are supportive.

Pupils enjoy attending a variety of after-school activities that develop their interests in areas such as archery, dance, gymnastics, football and music.

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

Pupils enjoy reading because it is prioritised and valued. Staff are well trained to teach phonics, and this begins promptly in Reception. Sounds are taught with precision, so most pupils learn them quickly and accurately. This supports them to go on to read with fluency and understanding. Leaders use assessment well to identify pupils who are falling behind in reading. Pupils are supported to catch up, and the majority do. However, some of the weakest readers require further practise to secure the sounds they need to tackle more difficult books.

The curriculum matches the scope and content of the national curriculum. It has been designed to include ambitious knowledge for pupils to learn in all subjects. Learning is well sequenced so that pupils revisit and practise important ideas over time. This helps them to remember and to learn more challenging ideas. For example, in science, pupils build working periscopes because they have learned how light travels and is reflected. Similarly, in history, pupils explain the concept of invasion by drawing on examples from contrasting periods of history they have studied.

Leaders want pupils to develop a rich vocabulary. The curriculum identifies words that pupils should learn and remember. For example, in art, pupils have developed different words to describe the work of artists. However, there are some important words that pupils do not understand or cannot remember. Teachers do not always identify this, so some pupils use vocabulary less precisely.

Children in the early years interact well with adults and other children. They sustain concentration when learning. Adults develop children's spoken language effectively. For example, children persevere when building a track for a ball to travel along and can explain how they might make the ball travel faster. Children's early mathematical skills are well developed. This is because the curriculum has been designed to help them to practise important skills. For example, children practise counting regularly, and this helps them to understand the concept of more and less.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported by staff who understand their needs. They access a full curriculum that is adapted well, to allow the building of skills, knowledge and independence over time.

Pupils usually behave sensibly in lessons and engage positively with their learning. Any examples of low-level disruption are typically addressed quickly. Leaders are rightly prioritising improving attendance and punctuality and are robust in challenging and supporting families to do so.

Pupils take on responsibilities in school such as being members of the school council. They take these roles seriously and understand their importance. The curriculum has been designed to help pupils debate important questions. Older pupils are beginning to do this with confidence. They show maturity during discussions on topics such as how civilised we are as a society.

Senior leaders have ensured that staff are well trained and are knowledgeable when delivering the planned curriculum. Staff value the training they have received and feel their workload is well managed. Some subject leaders and governors are new to their roles. While they understand how the curriculum has been designed and organised, they are less clear about the impact of the curriculum on pupils' achievements. As a result, they have not fully assessed the impact of their work or identified precisely what could be improved.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Clear systems are in place for raising and reporting safeguarding concerns. Staff have been trained effectively to use these systems. As a result, when needed, pupils and families receive the support they need from the school and from other services.

Pupils feel secure in school and in the playground. They understand how to keep themselves safe and who to tell if they are concerned. Pupils can identify a number of risks of working online and are knowledgeable about how to manage those risks effectively. Parents agree that their children are kept safe and are well looked after in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum in all subjects is ambitious. It has been designed to ensure that pupils revisit, practise and apply important ideas. This supports pupils to build their understanding over time. However, some pupils have not secured the vocabulary they need to tackle more difficult work, including in reading. Teachers do not always identify this. Leaders should ensure that teachers sharpen the ways in which they check pupils' understanding of key words and terms before moving on in their work.
- Some subject leaders and governors are new to their roles. While they understand the way the curriculum has been designed, they are less clear about the impact it is having on pupils. Senior leaders should ensure that other leaders and governors receive the training and support they need to grow into their roles effectively.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 the school and 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	143601
Local authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	10200565
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	181
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of the board of trustees	Mary Whitehead
Executive Headteacher	Jo Gordon
Headteacher	Katie Cutajar
Website	www.alderwood.greenwich.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Alderwood is smaller than an average-sized primary school. Since the previous inspection, the school has closed its nursery class.
- An above-average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. Pupils come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and speak a range of languages.
- The school has a designated specialist provision for 10 pupils with autism spectrum disorder.
- The school uses an on-site behaviour support provision operated by the Compass Multi-Academy Trust.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been changes to the leadership of the school. An acting deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2021.
- In July 2017, the school joined the Compass Multi-Academy Trust.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors completed deep dives in these subjects: reading, art, history, and science. To do this, they met with subject leaders, had discussions with staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work. Inspectors also considered leaders' plans for geography and physical education.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' priorities for improvement.
- Inspectors met with four governors, including the chair and vice-chair of the local school committee. They also spoke with the Chief Executive Officer of the Compass Multi-Academy Trust and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising records and through discussions with staff and pupils.
- The views of pupils, parents and staff, as gathered through discussions and Ofsted's surveys, were considered.
- Inspectors also visited the on-site behaviour support provision used by the school.

Inspection team

Nick Turvey, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Brian Simber

Ofsted Inspector

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