

Inspection of Alexandra Park Junior School

Brook Lane, Oldham, Greater Manchester OL8 2BE

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 December 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very happy at Alexandra Park Junior School. They arrive at school each day ready to learn. Pupils are courteous and polite. Very occasionally, some pupils say hurtful things to one another. However, pupils told inspectors that any incidents of name-calling, or bullying, are dealt with quickly by teachers.

Pupils behave well in school. They are confident that their teachers will treat them fairly. Pupils explained that teachers will stop poor behaviour from reoccurring. This helps pupils to feel safe. Relationships between pupils and staff are positive and supportive.

Pupils typically try their best. They want to live up to leaders' high expectations. However, pupils do not achieve as well as they should in some subjects, including in mathematics. This is because, in these subjects, there are times when teachers do not design learning that helps pupils to remember the intended curriculum over time.

Pupils participate regularly in a variety of events to support local charities. They take on a range of additional responsibilities, including becoming a school councillor and a sports leader. Many pupils are keen to make the most of the extensive choice of extra-curricular clubs that leaders offer.

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

Leaders have planned an interesting curriculum for pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Subject leaders have considered the important knowledge that they want pupils to learn in each subject. Added to this, leaders have adapted their curriculum plans to consider learning that pupils may have missed when accessing education remotely.

Leaders have developed many aspects of the curriculum. They have improved how teachers plan and deliver lessons in some subjects. For example, leaders ensure that teachers provide pupils with more opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. However, despite these improvements, pupils, including those with SEND, do not achieve as well as they should across the curriculum. This is because, in some subjects, teachers do not routinely plan learning that helps pupils to gain the key knowledge that they need to be successful. In these subjects, leaders are not providing sufficient support for teachers to deliver the curriculum plans well.

In some subjects, teachers use assessment information well to plan lessons that build on what pupils already know. For example, in English, teachers use assessment information effectively to help pupils use their knowledge of grammar accurately across different styles of writing.

Leaders have been less successful in ensuring that teachers use assessment information as well in some other subjects, including mathematics. As a result, there

are times when teachers do not make effective use of assessment strategies. For example, some teachers do not identify pupils' misconceptions or check that pupils' earlier learning is secure. This hinders pupils from gaining firm foundations on which to build.

All staff have had training so that they are well equipped to support those pupils who find it difficult to read. Many of these pupils read accurately. This is supporting them to access the curriculum more readily. Teachers ensure that pupils have books that match the sounds they know. However, there are times when those staff who support pupils with reading do not follow leaders' agreed approach to teaching phonics. This hampers these pupils in catching up quickly and becoming confident and fluent readers.

Governors are very supportive of the school. They hold leaders to account for the achievement of pupils in English and mathematics. They are developing their approach to how they challenge leaders more about pupils' success in other subjects.

Staff know pupils well. This helps staff to identify pupils' SEND needs. Leaders ensure that staff have the information that they need to provide effective support for pupils, including those pupils with SEND.

Pupils know that teachers expect them to behave well. They are excited to receive points for positive behaviour. During lessons, most pupils focus and concentrate on their learning. Pupils enjoy talking about their work. They told inspectors that they can concentrate on their learning because other pupils behave well.

During their time in school, leaders support pupils to develop personally. Pupils enjoy the many trips and visits that enrich the curriculum. They learn about faiths and cultures different to their own. They demonstrate humility and respect through their interactions with one another, including the need to value differences in faith and opinion.

Staff feel that leaders support them well. They appreciate the actions that leaders have taken to reduce their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff receive appropriate safeguarding training. They are alert to the signs that may indicate that a pupil is at risk of harm. Staff understand the safeguarding procedures that they should follow, including how to record and report any safeguarding concerns. Leaders work with a range of agencies to ensure that pupils and their families receive appropriate support to keep them safe.

Through the curriculum, pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. They learn about the potential dangers that they may face online.

Pupils benefit from swimming lessons and 'safe cycling' lessons so that they know how to keep themselves safe near open water and when cycling on busy roads.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders are not providing sufficient support for teachers to help them to deliver the curriculum plans well. In addition, some teachers struggle to use assessment strategies effectively so that they can revisit previous learning and help pupils to overcome their misconceptions. As a result, in some subjects, including mathematics, pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that teachers are supported effectively to deliver the intended curriculum and to use assessment strategies well. This will enable teachers to plan learning that builds on what pupils know and that allows them to remember what they have learned.
- Some staff do not follow leaders' agreed approach to delivering the reading curriculum. This means that pupils do not benefit from a systematic approach to develop their early reading knowledge. It stops some pupils from becoming confident and fluent readers as quickly as they should. Leaders should ensure that all staff follow the school's reading strategy to help pupils to catch up swiftly and further develop pupils' reading fluency.

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	105626
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10200776
Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	339
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Peter Widdall
Headteacher	Jennifer Lee Seabright
Website	www.alexandrapark.oldham.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	15 and 16 November 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During this inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher and members of the senior leadership team. The lead inspector met with four members of the governing body, including the chair of the governors. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including the free-text comments. Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey and the responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

- Inspectors viewed a range of safeguarding documentation. They spoke with staff to check how well they understood their safeguarding responsibilities. Inspectors checked the leaders' procedures for safe recruitment.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at playtimes and in lessons. They spoke with pupils to gather their views about behaviour and safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of staff to explore their views about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, geography and computing. They met with subject leaders, visited lessons and spoke with teachers. Inspectors spoke with pupils and looked at examples of their work. As well as this, inspectors scrutinised curriculum planning across a range of other subject areas. Inspectors listened to pupils read to trusted adults.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

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