

Inspection of Akaal Primary School

Grange Avenue, Derby, Derbyshire DE23 8DG

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 March 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils say that they are happy at this inclusive school and that they feel safe. One pupil said, 'It's like one big family.' The school's values shine through. Pupils can talk about these enthusiastically. They know about acceptance, respect, kindness and selflessly serving others. Pupils enjoy receiving lanyards when they have been creative, taken a risk or completed a challenge. Pupils behave well. They say that any rare instances of bullying are dealt with quickly.

Staff provide pupils with an enormous variety of activities to develop their talents and interests. Pupils' learning is enhanced through a wide range of educational visits and visitors. Pupils are nurtured and cared for extremely well. This work includes the children in the early years.

Leaders and staff have high expectations for all pupils. This includes those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, leaders have not yet given sufficient thought to the exact knowledge and vocabulary that they want pupils to learn. There is an inconsistent approach to the teaching of phonics. The improvement targets for pupils with SEND lack precision.

Parents and carers have positive views of the school. One parent said, 'This school offers so many opportunities. All the staff are welcoming and listen when you need them.'

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

Leaders have ensured that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of mathematics. There is a clear progression of knowledge and skills from the early years through into Year 6. Most pupils say that they enjoy the challenge of mathematics. Pupils in Year 5 were accurately recalling their knowledge of square and prime numbers. The daily 'can you still?' sessions, 'sticky days' and 'the big fat quiz of the term' encourage pupils to remember some of their previous learning. Pupils say these sessions are helpful.

Leaders have not considered precisely what they want pupils to learn, and when, in most other subjects. It is not clear how pupils will develop their individual subject knowledge, understanding and vocabulary over time.

The teaching of phonics is inconsistent. Some staff have received effective phonics training while others have not. Some pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read do not have the necessary skills to decode unfamiliar words. Some of their reading books are too challenging. There is no planned approach to providing pupils with the necessary support to help them to catch up. This prevents them from becoming fluent and confident readers.

Pupils have a positive attitude to school. They are keen to learn and to do well. Pupils' attendance is a strength. The vast majority of pupils are punctual at the start

of the day. There is an improvement in the behaviour and attendance of those pupils who have particular needs. There are warm and positive relationships between pupils and adults. Low-level disruption is rare.

Leaders have thought carefully about the provision for pupils' personal development. It is exceptional. This curriculum ensures that pupils have many opportunities to learn about, for example, diversity, safety, life skills, finance and keeping a healthy body and mind. There are specific lessons that help to promote an understanding of British and Sikh values, resilience and how to be good, active citizens. Pupils frequently discuss and debate various questions such as 'Do I need to believe in a god to be a good person?' There are many opportunities for pupils to consider their physical and mental health. They have an age-appropriate understanding of relationships and health education. Pupils are being extremely well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Pupils with SEND are identified promptly. There are positive links with outside agencies such as the local authority autism outreach and speech and language teams. However, not all of the pupils with SEND receive effective support. This is because their identified targets are not precise enough. This prevents them from progressing through the curriculum as well as they might.

The early years curriculum is appropriate. It provides a good range of stimulating activities for the children to complete. There are many opportunities for children to develop their knowledge of early mathematics, reading and writing. Children in the early years follow well-established routines. This includes in the spacious and well-structured outdoor area.

Leaders have improved the school in most areas since the last inspection. The governing body receives appropriate information from the headteacher. Governors visit the school for themselves to find out what is happening. They hold leaders to account in most areas. Staff say that leaders are sensitive to their well-being and workload. Staff appreciate the various training opportunities that are offered.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff have received appropriate safeguarding training. They are knowledgeable regarding the potential signs of child abuse, exploitation or neglect. Leaders keep appropriate safeguarding records. They are swift to contact outside agencies should a pupil or a family require extra support.

Pupils are taught how to keep safe, for example, when messaging on mobile phones, by applying sun cream and through learning how to cross the road safely.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not given sufficient thought to the subject knowledge and vocabulary that they want pupils to learn, and when. Consequently, pupils do not always encounter learning in a logical way that helps to build their knowledge and understanding over time. Leaders should ensure that there is clarity around the knowledge and vocabulary that they want pupils to learn, and when, across all subjects, from Reception through to Year 6.
- Staff have varying degrees of confidence when delivering phonics lessons. This lack of consistency and staff training is preventing some pupils from becoming confident and fluent readers. Leaders should ensure that a rigorous and sequential approach to the teaching of phonics and early reading is in place and that staff know how best to support all pupils to become confident and fluent readers.
- The improvement targets that are set for pupils with SEND are not precise enough. It is therefore unclear if the intended outcomes are being met when these targets are reviewed. Leaders should ensure that improvement targets for pupils with SEND contain the precise, intended outcomes.

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	142109
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	10212257
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Paramjit Kaur
Headteacher	Julie Fellowes
Website	akaalprimaryschool.org
Date of previous inspection	5 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a Sikh faith primary school. It underwent a section 48 inspection on 5 July 2018.
- Since the previous inspection, a new chair of governors has taken up the role.
- The school does not use the services of any alternative providers.

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. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors held various meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and the leaders responsible for different curriculum subjects, phonics and early reading, early years, and pupils with SEND. A meeting was held with seven members of the governing body, including the joint vice-chairs.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, phonics and early reading, science and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector checked the single central record. Checks were made on staff training and staff's knowledge of the school's safeguarding procedures. The lead inspector scrutinised safeguarding records.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's parent, pupil and staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Peter Stonier, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Phil Abbott

Ofsted Inspector

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