

Inspection of Altrincham CofE (Aided) Primary School

Townfield Road, Altrincham, Cheshire WA14 4DS

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 January 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy to attend this welcoming and caring school. Leaders and staff are ambitious for the achievement of all pupils, including those with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils achieve well in the majority of subjects.

Pupils describe the school as 'a family where everybody is respected'. They understand fairness, equality and diversity. Pupils recognise that 'we are all unique so there is always going to be something different about you and that's fine'. Pupils flourish in leadership roles such as librarians or members of the school council.

Pupils feel safe. They appreciate the support that they receive from staff. Leaders deal with bullying effectively. They have high expectations for behaviour. Classrooms are calm. This allows pupils to do their best in lessons.

Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, benefit from an extensive programme of high-quality opportunities that enhance their learning and support their personal development. Leaders remove barriers that might prevent pupils from attending these activities effectively. Pupils participate in interesting trips and visits, including adventurous outdoor activities. They take part in exciting residential visits and cultural visits to an art gallery and the theatre. They also learn to play a musical instrument and enjoy live musical performances.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND. This ambitious curriculum starts in the early years. Teachers are well trained to deliver the curriculum and they have secure subject knowledge.

Leaders have identified what pupils and children in the early years must learn in most subjects. However, in a few subjects, leaders have not identified the well-ordered steps in learning from the early years through to Year 1 and into key stages 1 and 2. In history, for example, pupils have learned about different sources of information. However, they struggle to recall or use this knowledge in their later learning.

Leaders and teachers accurately identify pupils with SEND at the earliest possible stage. They check carefully that the right support is in place for these pupils as they move through the school. Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND are able to take part in all aspects of school life.

Teachers make checks on pupils' learning. This helps them to identify which pupils need more help or guidance. In most subjects, leaders gather a range of information about how the curriculum supports pupils' learning. This provides subject leaders with a clear understanding of how the curriculum helps pupils to increase their knowledge successfully over time. In a few subjects, subject leaders' work to gather

this information is less well developed. This prevents them from fully understanding how well pupils remember their learning over time in these subjects.

Leaders have introduced a clearly sequenced phonics curriculum. Teachers in the early years and key stage 1 build pupils' phonic knowledge skilfully. They make sure that pupils read books that are well matched to their phonic knowledge. Teachers are swift to spot any pupils who may be falling behind with their reading. Staff help these pupils to catch up quickly. Older pupils are developing effective reading habits. They speak enthusiastically about books they have studied.

Pupils behave well. They rarely disturb the learning of their peers. Pupils learn about their rights and responsibilities as future citizens. They understand the importance of developing respectful relationships with people who may be different from themselves. Leaders have developed a highly effective programme of learning to support pupils' personal development. Leaders make sure that pupils understand a range of important issues, such as equality, diversity and fundamental British values. Pupils have extensive opportunities beyond the classroom. For example, working alongside a local nursing home, where pupils develop empathy and communication skills to engage with residents. Pastoral support for pupils is effective.

Children in the early years settle into school life quickly. They have a well-developed understanding of classroom routines. Leaders ensure that they have ample opportunities to explore the outdoors. This helps children to develop confidence and independence. They develop their language and number skills well. Across the school, teachers encourage pupils, including children in the early years, to extend their vocabulary. Children in the early years are well prepared for the continuation of their learning in Year 1.

Governors know their school well. Effective communication means that governors have the necessary information to hold leaders to account for standards and the quality of education in the school.

Staff feel respected and valued. They appreciate the ample opportunities that they have to participate in professional development and training.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff at all levels receive appropriate, regular and ongoing safeguarding training. Staff are clear about their responsibilities. They use the school's processes and procedures well and report any concerns promptly. Leaders liaise closely with families and a range of agencies to quickly identify and address any safeguarding issues.

Pupils are taught about how to keep themselves safe, including learning about online safety and road safety. They recognise the importance of rules around safety on trips.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In one or two subjects, pupils' learning does not build in the most logical order from the early years through to Year 6. This hinders some pupils from learning and remembering as much knowledge as they could. Leaders should improve the order in which knowledge is taught in these subjects. This is so that pupils build securely on earlier learning to embed and deepen their knowledge before they tackle new concepts.
- In a few subjects, subject leaders' work to check on the impact of the curriculums is at an early stage. This means that these subject leaders do not have a clear enough understanding of how well the curriculum is helping pupils know and remember more. Leaders should ensure that in these subjects, they gather the information they need to make sure that the curriculum is helping pupils to build up their knowledge securely over time.

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.

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	106341
Local authority	Trafford
Inspection number	10256080
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kevin Davis
Headteacher	Kirsty Chrysler
Website	www.altrinchamceprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 March 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.
- This school is a Church of England voluntary aided school. The last section 48 inspection took place in January 2018.
- A number of new governors have been appointed since the last inspection.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher and other leaders and members of staff. They also spoke with members of the governing body. Inspectors spoke with a representative of the diocese and the local authority.

- Inspectors looked at a range of documents and spoke with leaders about the school's arrangements to safeguard pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. They talked with curriculum leaders of these subject areas. Inspectors also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with pupils. Inspectors also observed some pupils reading to staff.
- Inspectors also considered other subjects. They discussed the curriculums with leaders and looked at pupils' work.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in class and as they moved around school. They also observed pupils in the dining hall and playing outside at lunchtime.
- Inspectors spoke with two groups of pupils about their experiences at school.
- Inspectors looked at the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. They also met with parents before school to find out their views of the school.
- Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Ian Shackleton, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Claire Marrin

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