

Inspection of The Alderton Junior School

Alderton Hall Lane, Loughton, Essex IG10 3HE

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 January 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish in this happy, harmonious junior school. They enjoy a wealth of opportunities to develop their talents and interests. Everybody benefits from the extensive range of trips and visits which enhance the curriculum. Many pupils attend clubs, such as gardening or yoga. Older pupils eagerly take on a wide range of responsibilities around the school. The school's values shine through positive relationships between pupils and adults, in and out of the classroom.

Pupils are safe here. Bullying is rare. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of bullying and know it is wrong. They are confident that adults will stop any unkind behaviour or bullying quickly.

Pupils behave well in class and around the school. They respond well to their teachers' high expectations and clear routines. Pupils confidently share their own ideas. They are attentive to adults and the views of others. In lessons, everyone can get on with their learning.

Pupils have many opportunities to develop their physical and mental health. Playtimes are energetic and fun. Pupils enjoy their daily movement sessions as well as physical education lessons. Older pupils learn how to manage their worries and become resilient learners.

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

Leaders have carefully considered what pupils need to learn so they can achieve well. Curriculum maps set out sequences of skills in a logical order. In most subjects, teachers deliver the curriculum well. They revisit previous learning and explain how this will help pupils with new ideas. Teachers introduce new concepts clearly. They give plenty of structured practice so that pupils can apply their new learning. Teachers regularly check how well pupils understand new vocabulary. They explain ideas and vocabulary again when needed. In a few subjects, teachers do not routinely check that pupils understand before moving on or adjusting what they teach. They do not always give pupils enough opportunities to correct their errors. When this happens, some pupils develop misconceptions and achieve less well.

Leaders prioritise the teaching of reading. Carefully planned series of lessons are in place. These give pupils the confidence and skills to tackle and understand new texts. Regular, careful assessments ensure that pupils have a choice of books at the right level to read independently. Leaders quickly identify pupils who need extra help in reading. These pupils get regular extra support to help them improve. Most pupils read well and with enthusiasm. They also really enjoy the ambitious books their teachers introduce in daily story sessions.

Leaders provide an extensive range of opportunities for pupils to learn about themselves and about the wider world. These enable pupils to develop self-confidence, resilience and aspiration. Leaders ensure that provision for personal

development is of the highest quality. They involve external organisations to supplement staff's expertise when necessary. Pupils throughout the school are courteous, tolerant and respectful.

Leaders have established clear routines across the school. These routines enable lessons to run smoothly and ensure that all pupils have a chance to contribute. Pupils enthusiastically share ideas in pairs, and develop their understanding by building on the ideas of others.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. For pupils with the highest level of need, skilful adults provide nurturing assistance. For other pupils, adults provide personalised resources or clearer explanations so that they can access the same learning as their peers. Interventions provide extra help for those who need it.

Staff are overwhelmingly proud to be part of the team and have full confidence in school leaders. They appreciate the efforts of leaders to support their well-being and develop their skills. Many parents also comment very positively on the help provided and efforts made by staff for their children. Governors support and challenge school leaders effectively. They carry out their statutory duties diligently.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Well-trained adults are vigilant for any signs of safeguarding concern. All concerns are recorded, reviewed and followed up promptly when required.

Leaders are tenacious in securing help for pupils and their families. They provide bespoke support in school and seek advice when appropriate from external agencies, such as the local authority designated officer and social services. They ensure that safer recruitment processes are followed.

Leaders have adapted the curriculum in light of local safeguarding concerns. Pupils learn how to avoid and resist negative influences and pressures. Pupils are well informed about how to stay safe online and how to report their concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, not all teachers have the expertise to use assessment information to adjust the curriculum as required. When this happens, pupils do not achieve as well in these subjects as they do in other areas of the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that all adults have the training and ongoing support they need to adjust teaching when necessary, so that all pupils can achieve well.

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	145728
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10254976
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	216
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Reverend Lee Batson
Headteacher	Kirsty Johnson
Website	www.aldertonjunior.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This is a two-form entry junior school.
- Leaders use one registered provider of alternative education.

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.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, computing and physical development. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead and other staff to discuss safeguarding.

- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation during the inspection, including school development plans, safeguarding and behaviour records.
- The inspectors considered the 62 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 45 free-text comments. They also considered 21 responses to the staff survey and 36 responses to the pupil survey.
- The inspectors spoke to groups of pupils about their experiences of school life and their learning in lessons to understand what it is like to be a pupil at this school. They also observed the behaviour of pupils at breaktimes and around the school.

Inspection team

Lynne Williams, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sue Pryor

Ofsted Inspector

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