

# Inspection of a good school: Albany Village Primary School

Crossgill, Albany, Washington, Tyne and Wear NE37 1UA

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Inspection dates:

7 and 8 February 2023

## **Outcome**

Albany Village Primary School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Albany Village Primary School is a friendly and inclusive school, where pupils are happy and safe. Pupils behave well both in lessons and in the playground. They are kind and considerate to each other. Playground buddies are keen to help younger pupils. Bullying is rare. Leaders do not tolerate it.

Positive relationships are a strength of the school. Pupils are well supported. They know staff will help them if they have a concern. Communication with parents has improved. Parents are well informed about how well their children are doing. The vast majority of parents who communicated with the inspector are overwhelmingly positive about the school.

The new headteacher has worked successfully to improve morale across the school. Staff and leaders are a united team. They are determined to provide pupils with high-quality, memorable learning opportunities. Staff and pupils are inspired by the school motto to 'Reach their own stars'.

Leaders have worked effectively to develop an ambitious curriculum. They have high expectations for all pupils. Recent changes to the curriculum are already making a difference. Leaders emphasise both academic success and pastoral care. Pupils enjoy a varied range of clubs, such as Lego, choir and rugby. Assemblies celebrate success and aim to prepare pupils as lifelong learners.

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

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to achieve well. They know that some pupils have previously not achieved as highly as they could. Staff are working effectively to ensure that all pupils are now provided with the right level of help so they can know and remember more across the curriculum.

Leaders have identified the most important knowledge they want pupils to learn. This helps to develop pupils' expertise across a broad range of subjects. The curriculum is carefully sequenced across all subjects. Teachers build learning in a logical way to meet the needs of all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

In some wider curriculum subjects, the activities that some teachers plan do not focus on the most important things pupils need to learn. Pupils enjoy the activity but struggle to make connections to the intended learning.

Assessment in reading and mathematics is effective. Teachers ask pertinent questions to check on pupils' understanding. In these subjects, teachers use assessments to support future learning. However, in some wider curriculum subjects, teachers do not check pupils' understanding well enough.

Leaders prioritise reading. The phonics programme is well taught. Pupils read books that match the sounds that they are learning. Teachers make timely checks on how well pupils are developing their phonic knowledge. Pupils who need extra support get the help that they need to become fluent readers. As a result, pupils learn to read well. There is a love of reading throughout the school. Pupils talk passionately about their favourite authors and stories.

In mathematics, staff have a secure understanding of the curriculum. Teachers ask questions to challenge pupils' thinking. There are regular opportunities to revisit previous learning. Teachers present information clearly and quickly address any misconceptions. They use resources well to help pupils to become confident mathematicians.

In the early years, teachers prepare children well for Year 1. Leaders have prioritised the development of spoken language and vocabulary. Adults are skilled at modelling and extending children's language.

Leaders ensure that there are clear systems in place for the early identification and support of pupils with SEND. Support plans clearly outline the help that pupils need. In class, adults provide effective support and encouragement. This support helps pupils to confidently access the full curriculum.

Pupils' behaviour across school is good. They behave well in lessons, concentrating on their learning. Pupils understand the school rules and value the reward system.

Leaders promote pupils' personal development well. Pupils learn about the fundamental British values. They hear stories about inspirational people, and reflect on how they can learn from these examples. Leaders enrich the curriculum by inviting a variety of visitors into school. Pupils visit places of interest, such as the gurdwara and Derwent Hill. Pupils get opportunities to develop and share their talents. Pupils enjoy singing and sharing their instrumental work with family and friends at the Albany Village music festival.

Leaders have taken swift action to improve the school. This has had a positive impact on the quality of education. Governors know the school well. They fully support and challenge leaders in their work.

There is a strong team ethos. Leaders work with staff effectively to develop their confidence and expertise. Staff appreciate leaders' consideration for their well-being and workload. Leaders make sure staff have allocated time to fulfil their responsibilities.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff receive regular training. They are vigilant, and report any concerns swiftly.

Staff work closely with parents to develop trust and to offer early help. Leaders communicate with external agencies effectively to ensure pupils receive timely support. The designated safeguarding leads have created a thorough system to monitor and record all safeguarding concerns. Appropriate recruitment checks are undertaken to ensure all adults are safe to work in school.

Leaders have created an appropriate curriculum to help pupils identify and manage risks. Pupils know they can speak to a trusted adult if they need any support.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- At times, in some foundation subjects, staff do not successfully match activities to focus on the most important things that pupils need to learn. Some tasks do not support pupils to know more and remember more. As a result, some pupils are unable to recall the important knowledge that leaders have identified. Leaders should ensure that teachers receive training and support so they have the necessary skills to select activities to teach these areas of the curriculum successfully.
- In some subjects, teachers do not accurately check to make sure that pupils have remembered what they have been taught. This means that teachers do not identify gaps in pupils' knowledge or use this information to plan future learning. Leaders should ensure that systems are further developed to check what pupils know so that teaching can be adapted appropriately in these subjects.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2017.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	131036
<b>Local authority</b>	Sunderland
<b>Inspection number</b>	10255830
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	208
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Simon Tate
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stephen Jones
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.albanyvillageprimary.org.uk">www.albanyvillageprimary.org.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	14 and 15 November 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

## Information about this school

- The headteacher has been in post since September 2021.
- The school has a breakfast and an after-school club.
- The school uses a registered alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector examined the single central record and checked documents relating to safer recruitment. The inspector looked at how safeguarding incidents are reported. Conversations were held with leaders, teachers, support staff, governors and pupils about the culture of safeguarding in the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. The inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspector met with the leader responsible for early years and looked at a range of documentation and planning.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders and members of staff. The inspector talked with members of the governing body and held a telephone conversation with the school improvement partner and the local authority adviser.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour throughout the school day, including during lesson visits, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes. The inspector spoke to groups of pupils about their views on behaviour and the wider experiences they receive at school.
- The inspector studied a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan, risk assessments, attendance data and minutes of governing body meetings.
- The inspector considered the views of parents, pupils and staff as part of the review of the responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Alison Stephenson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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