

# Inspection of a good school: Alver Valley Junior School

21 Falcon Meadows Way, Rowner, Gosport, Hampshire PO13 8AA

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Inspection dates: 21 and 22 March 2023

## **Outcome**

Alver Valley Junior School continues to be a good school.

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

Pupils are proud of their happy and vibrant school. Everyone feels safe in this nurturing and friendly environment, where relationships are built on warmth and mutual respect. Staff have high expectations, and most pupils consistently meet these. If pupils need help with managing their emotions, staff show kindness and expertise to support them effectively. Behaviour is positive around the school, and pupils are not worried about bullying. If it happens, leaders take swift action. Every pupil identifies a 'trusted adult' whom they can always talk to.

Leaders provide impressive pastoral care for different groups of pupils. There are special clubs for young carers and pupils with autism spectrum disorder. Outdoor learning programmes give pupils a boost with well-being. The 'Troopers' club supports families who serve in the armed forces.

At playtime, pupils keep active by playing football and basketball. They invent creative games using equipment such as beanbags and hoops. Pupils love practising their gymnastic skills and balancing on the climbing equipment.

Pupils were enthralled by visits to the local science centre and residential activity centre. Another highlight was a film-making project with an environmental focus, led by the pupil art council. Pupils visited the beach before writing and producing fantastic films about global warming.

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

Leaders have high aspirations for all, ensuring that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) enjoy the school's broad curriculum and achieve success. Leaders skilfully identify learning needs through close assessment of how pupils learn. Pupils with SEND are thriving, with well-planned support from knowledgeable staff and access to appropriate resources to aid their independence.

Reading is prioritised. Leaders are dedicated to ensuring that every pupil learns to read fluently. Teachers identify gaps in reading ability when pupils join the school. Pupils enjoy reading well-matched books that provide effective practice of specific sounds. Staff expertise is strong and consistent. One-to-one catch-up sessions provide pupils with high-quality support, where needed. Teachers read a rich variety of books, so all pupils see themselves in stories. Pupils love the well-stocked library.

Every subject is precisely planned with essential knowledge and skills. Leaders recognise that many pupils need support with language development. As a result, vocabulary is clearly defined and taught across all subjects. The school has successfully embedded a philosophical approach across the curriculum. In history, pupils debate the ethics of using animals in the First World War. In mathematics, pupils solve problems, evaluate methods and 'convince' their peers using reasoning skills. Pupils learn to reflect, challenge and persuade. This develops their resilience while reinforcing knowledge.

Teachers, including those who are early in their careers, enjoy constant professional development to keep their subject knowledge up to date. Staff use the school's efficient assessment system to give meaningful feedback to pupils during lessons. This helps pupils to make strong progress and achieve well in reading, writing, mathematics and foundation subjects.

Behaviour is positive in classrooms and learning is not disrupted. Pupils say, 'Our teachers are amazing and always help us.' Sometimes, younger pupils call out when they are excited about learning activities. Pupils know and respect the six strands of the school's behaviour approach.

Some pupils have missed too much school since the pandemic restrictions. Leaders and governors are working tirelessly to reduce absence, but some disadvantaged pupils' attendance remains too low.

Pupils are proud to represent the school in netball and football matches. Pupils love the clubs, such as cookery club. Enrichment activities, such as woodland learning, offer rich nurture for vulnerable pupils. Leaders hope to offer these opportunities more widely, as not all pupils experience these. Pupils are proud to take on responsibilities such as those of diversity ambassador. Pupils appreciate the views of others and respect different opinions. In personal development lessons, pupils explore important issues such as peer pressure and mental health.

Leaders are dedicated, inclusive and highly effective. Staff feel trusted, supported and motivated. There are no concerns about well-being or workload. Governors ask probing questions to hold leaders to account. Providing strong support and challenge, governors share leaders' ambitions to find the best in every pupil.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that safeguarding practice is rigorous. Recruitment processes are thorough, and training is frequently updated. Everyone understands and follows safeguarding procedures. All staff know how to identify and report concerns. Leaders follow up every issue with tireless commitment. They work effectively with social care and mental health services to find crucial support for vulnerable families. Record-keeping is detailed, demonstrating strong communication.

Leaders have strengthened the safeguarding team further with the appointment of a family and safeguarding officer.

Pupils show secure understanding of healthy living, relationships and online safety. Well-designed assemblies and lessons help prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

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

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

- Some pupils have had poor attendance since the pandemic restrictions. Their persistent absence means that they may not achieve as well as they should. Leaders are rightly prioritising this and must continue their efforts to ensure high attendance for all pupils.
- The school provides impressive extracurricular nurture opportunities for specific groups of pupils. However, some of these experiences, such as outdoor learning, are not currently available to all. Leaders should continue to widen this offer to ensure that opportunities can be shared and appreciated across the whole school.

## **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 April 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>	116172
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10227893
<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	223
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Steve Corless
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jill Roseblade (Executive Headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.alvervalleyschools.co.uk">www.alvervalleyschools.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27 April 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This school is part of a federation with Alver Valley Infant and Nursery School.
- The school was previously known as Siskin Junior School.
- The number of pupils on roll at the school has increased significantly since the previous inspection.
- The school currently uses one alternative provider.

## 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 the evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, the head of school, the assistant headteachers, the SEND coordinator, the deputy SEND coordinator, subject leaders, teachers and support staff.

- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector studied documents and records, including the school's single central record and child-protection referrals. The inspector spoke with designated safeguarding leads, staff, governors and pupils.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, history and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, spoke to pupils and looked at pupils' work.
- The inspector also evaluated pupils' work in personal, social, health and economic education.
- The inspector listened to pupils read and observed catch-up interventions to evaluate how staff provide extra support to pupils.
- The inspector met three members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector spoke by telephone with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector analysed responses to the staff survey and spoke to staff about their views of the school.
- The inspector considered the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the additional free-text comments.
- The inspector also took account of additional information that parents and carers shared by telephone.
- The inspector met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils during social times and in lessons.
- The inspector also considered responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

### **Inspection team**

Scott Reece, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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