

Inspection of a good school: Alkrington Primary School

Manor Road, Alkrington, Middleton, Manchester M24 1JZ

Inspection dates:

28 and 29 March 2023

Outcome

Alkrington Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel happy and safe at school. Relationships between adults and pupils are warm and respectful. Pupils value that they are well supported and cared for both academically and socially.

Staff have high expectations of what all pupils can achieve socially and academically. As a result, pupils work hard and achieve well. They are polite and well behaved in lessons and are considerate of each other. If any bullying does occur, pupils are confident to raise their concerns with a member of staff. Adults sort out bullying incidents quickly and well. Pupils know that they are treated fairly.

Leaders have developed a wealth of opportunities to deepen pupils' learning and help them to become active citizens of the world. Pupils learn important life skills, such as how to make a simple meal and use cutlery appropriately. Staff also help them make a wider contribution to their community.

Leaders, staff, parents and carers have established positive partnerships which support pupils to engage in all that the school has to offer. Pupils and parents value the extra experiences in sports, the arts and culture that teachers provide. The dance festival is a particular highlight every year, especially when the teachers take centre stage to perform their routine.

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

Learning to read is given the highest priority, and pupils have access to high-quality books throughout the school which helps them become fluent readers. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy reading a range of carefully chosen texts in lessons. They are encouraged to develop a love of reading. They share their successes proudly. Reading buddies help key stage 1 pupils practise reading, and all pupils are taken to the local library to get their first library cards.

Leaders have recently changed the approach to teaching phonics. They have ensured that teachers across school are well trained to teach children in the early years, including those in the two-year-old provision, to recognise important sounds in the words that they hear in books and conversations. Pupils in key stage 1 continue to build secure phonic knowledge. This enables them to read and spell unfamiliar words. They quickly gain confidence in reading, as books are well matched to the sounds that they are learning. If older pupils still struggle with reading, additional, effective support is in place to help them catch up.

Leaders have recently revised the curriculums in several subjects. These new curriculums identify the most important knowledge that pupils should gain and when this should happen. This enables pupils to build on what they know and make links with new learning. It helps them to achieve well. However, leaders have not checked carefully enough that these new curriculums are being delivered as well as they expect. This means that they are unsure if teachers need additional guidance or if pupils are learning all that they should.

Teachers present new information clearly in lessons. In most subjects, they check what pupils have learned, and they address any errors quickly and prevent misconceptions from developing. However, in some subjects, teachers are still at the early stages of exploring the best approaches to check that pupils know more and remember more of the curriculum.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are quickly identified. Teachers adapt activities so that these pupils can access the curriculum and achieve well.

Pupils know that everyone has a right to learn and that teachers have a right to teach. They enjoy taking an active part in their learning. Children in the early years are taught how to concentrate on tasks and follow instructions well from the very start of their time in school. These positive attitudes, and pupils' good conduct across key stages 1 and 2, ensure that classrooms are calm so that pupils can get on with their learning.

Most pupils attend school regularly. However, some disadvantaged pupils are absent too often. This means that they miss out on their learning and all the opportunities available to them.

Leaders prioritise the wider development of pupils. The curriculum promotes pupils' personal development effectively. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests. Pupils are taught about mutual respect and social responsibility. Every pupil is expected to contribute to the school and the wider community. Pupils in the eco-council are proactive agents of change in school, for example ensuring that food waste is reduced.

Staff feel valued and supported. Leaders consider the impact on staff's workload carefully when introducing changes. Staff, including those at the start of their careers, appreciate the many opportunities that they have to engage in training.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding issues are quickly identified. This means that pupils quickly get the right support, within school and from external agencies. Leaders keep thorough records about safeguarding incidents. They escalate their concerns appropriately when required.

Staff are kept up to date about safeguarding issues through regular briefings. They understand the risks that pupils face. Staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and know how to pass on concerns to those responsible for safeguarding.

Pupils learn about appropriate relationships and how to keep themselves safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In one or two subjects, leaders and teachers have not decided on the most effective approaches to check that pupils have understood what they have been taught. This means that teachers are not sure if pupils are building up their knowledge securely over time. Leaders should ensure that teachers are equipped to find out what pupils retain from their learning so they can build their knowledge securely.
- Leaders are in the early stages of checking that the new curriculums are being delivered as they intend. This means that they are not able to pinpoint how well pupils are learning. Leaders should make sure that the revised curriculums are being followed so that pupils can build their knowledge progressively over time.
- Some disadvantaged pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should. This means that they miss out on their learning. Leaders should ensure that these pupils attend school regularly so that they can achieve well.

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 January 2018.

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	105786
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	10268883
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	478
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ian Chadwick
Headteacher	Tim Barnes
Website	www.alkrington.rochdale.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.
- There is provision for two-year-old children.

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 carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector 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, including pupils with SEND.
- The inspector listened to pupils read and discussed their books with them.
- The inspector also spoke with representatives of the local authority and members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.

- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector scrutinised safeguarding records, including the single central record. He also spoke to leaders, staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- The inspector spoke to the leaders for personal, social and health education and discussed curriculum thinking for this aspect of the school's work.
- The inspector observed social times and spoke to pupils informally during these times.
- The inspector spoke to groups of pupils about their learning and experiences in school.
- The inspector took account of the Ofsted pupil and staff surveys.
- The inspector spoke to parents and carers and took account of Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

Inspection team

Steve Kirkpatrick, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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