

Inspection of a good school: Acacias Community Primary School

Alexandra Drive, Burnage, Manchester, Greater Manchester M19 2WW

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 July 2023

Outcome

Acacias Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school where everyone feels valued. Pupils enjoy being part of a thriving and vibrant community.

Staff and pupils have worked collaboratively to create a set of values which reflect the school's positive ethos and approach. Pupils demonstrate 'kindness, respect, courage and equality' towards staff and each other on a daily basis.

Leaders make sure that any bullying incidents are fully investigated and dealt with quickly and effectively. As a result, pupils feel safe, happy and well cared for.

Leaders have the highest of aspirations for their pupils. They expect them to give their best and to behave well. This includes children in the early years and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils eagerly rise to these expectations. They work hard and enjoy harmonious relationships with each other.

Pupils take on a wide range of leadership roles with diligence and pride. These include working as safety captains, junior PCSOs (police community support officers) as well as digital leaders and playground pals.

Parents and carers who shared their views with the inspector feel that staff help pupils to develop confidence and to be well-prepared for the next stage of their education. Parents feel very much part of the whole-school community.

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

Leaders and staff have worked at pace to develop an engaging curriculum which is ambitious for all pupils, including those with SEND. They have ensured that, in each subject, pupils are introduced to new learning in small logical steps so that pupils can build their knowledge from the early years to the end of Year 6. However, in a few subjects, some refinements are relatively new. This means that there has not been

enough time for these subjects to be fully embedded so that pupils know more and remember more over time.

In the most recent national assessments, pupils did not perform as well as their peers in writing. Leaders have taken decisive action to address this. Although there are still some gaps in pupils' knowledge, outcomes in writing are improving. Overall, pupils achieve well in most subjects.

Teachers show strong subject knowledge and teach subjects with confidence. Subject leaders provide helpful guidance and advice. Staff use assessment well to rapidly resolve any misconceptions and to shape and adapt future teaching.

Reading is valued and celebrated at this school. Leaders and staff work hard to spark and develop pupils' love of reading and interest in a range of books and texts.

Staff are positive about the changes to the early reading programme. They teach phonics consistently well. Early readers who may be struggling receive effective and timely support. They read books well matched to their current phonics level. This helps them to gain confidence and fluency in their reading.

Leaders and staff celebrate reading events and praise pupils for reading widely and often. As a result, pupils have very positive attitudes to reading and read well. Pupils spoke with great enthusiasm about a recent trip to celebrate their 'millionaire' reader status.

Pupils with SEND flourish under the care and guidance of their teachers. Their needs are quickly and effectively identified. They receive appropriate help and support so they can mostly learn the same curriculum as their friends. They enjoy all that the school has to offer, both academically and socially.

Pupils benefit from a wide variety of opportunities to be active and responsible citizens. They make a strong contribution towards their local community. Pupils regularly devise creative and engaging ways to raise money for worthy causes. These include 'break the rules' day and the 'rainbow challenge' where parents sponsor pupils to eat a wide range of healthy foods. Pupils used the funds raised from these events to support local food banks.

Pupils know the importance of having an active lifestyle and looking after their mental well-being. They enjoy taking part in daily mindfulness sessions. They participate in a range of after-school clubs and activities, including residential visits. Pupils also gain an awareness of fundamental British values through their roles as members of the pupils' parliament.

Pupils have a strong understanding of diversity and spoke maturely about the importance of treating people from different backgrounds and cultures with respect. Pupils, including those in the early years and those with SEND, get on well with each other and their learning is rarely disturbed by others. They behave well in lessons and around school.

Governors share leaders' high ambition and provide leaders with helpful support and challenge. Staff are proud to work at the school. They appreciate the steps that leaders take to reduce their workload and to ensure a good work-life balance.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders leave no stone unturned to keep pupils safe. They work very effectively with a range of external partners so that pupils and their families get the help and support that they need in a timely manner.

Staff receive regular training on a range of safeguarding issues. This gives them the knowledge and confidence to swiftly spot any signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm or abuse. They act quickly, following the school's agreed procedures to report any worries.

Pupils learn about keeping their personal details hidden when using the internet. They also know what constitutes a healthy relationship.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have recently made some refinements to some of their curriculums. It is too early to fully see the impact of these changes. Leaders should check that these changes have the desired impact so that pupils achieve as well in these subjects as in other curriculums.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2014.

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	105401
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10283641
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	473
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chairs of governing body	Pam Higgins and Anne Zaidi
Headteacher	David Griffiths
Website	www.acacias.manchester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.
- Leaders offer a before-school breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken this into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, she met with leaders, discussed curriculums, visited a sample of lessons, met with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and reviewed samples of pupils' work. She also observed pupils from Year 1 to Year 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspector considered other subjects on the school's curriculum. She talked to the leaders who lead these subjects. She spoke to pupils about their learning in these subjects. She looked at samples of work in these subjects.

- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, other leaders and staff.
- The inspector met with governors, including the co-chair of the governing body. She spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector spoke with different groups of pupils to gather their views of the school and held discussions about their behaviour and learning. She also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at playtime.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. She also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- The inspector met with those responsible for safeguarding at the school. She scrutinised a range of documentation in relation to safeguarding. She also spoke with governors, staff, parents and pupils about safeguarding.
- The inspector considered a range of documentation provided by school leaders and staff. This included the school priority action plan, minutes of governing body meetings, headteacher reports and the leaders' self-evaluation document.

Inspection team

Louise McArdle, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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