

Inspection of a good school: Alfred Sutton Primary School

148 Wokingham Road, Reading, Berkshire RG6 1JR

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 October 2023

Outcome

Alfred Sutton Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's 'Sutton six' values form a firm foundation for all aspects of the school's work. The majestic London plane tree, which is situated at the heart of the school, features prominently in these values. Pupils strive to earn 'fruit awards' for effort and 'leaf awards' for conduct, for example. They wear their reward badges proudly. Relationships throughout the school are warm and positive. Caring staff get to know pupils well. This makes everyone feel welcome. Pupils know staff want the best for them. One said, 'Teachers are really kind and help you understand in the best way you can.'

The school is ambitious for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result, pupils thrive in this inclusive and vibrant school. Pupils play together harmoniously. Parents speak very highly of the school. One parent, typical of many, said, 'I know that the staff want the very best for our children.' Children learn how to behave, rooted in the school's values, from the minute they join Nursery. Older pupils appreciate the opportunity to be 'well-being ambassadors', which involves supporting younger pupils at breaktime. This teaches them valuable skills of organisation and leadership.

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

The coherent curriculum begins in the early years. The school has thought carefully about the order in which knowledge and skills are taught. Knowledgeable staff accurately identify the needs of pupils with SEND and adapt the curriculum effectively to meet these pupils' needs. Expert staff champion pupils with SEND and other disadvantaged pupils by keeping a close eye on their progress and attendance. This means that these pupils achieve their very best outcomes.

The school knows that reading 'unlocks learning'. As a result, it is a high priority. Well-trained staff teach phonics systematically. Children in the early years love practising their phonics. Older pupils relish reading books that have been precisely matched to the sounds that they know. Everyone works together effectively to develop pupils' accuracy and

fluency. Vibrantly themed libraries entice pupils in. Reading features prominently in all classrooms. Pupils look forward to daily story time with excitement. Staff make all reading activities engaging. In the early years, a strong focus on communication and language prepares children well for Year 1. Children learn to take turns and share. The well-resourced outdoor space, in the shade of the plane tree, invites children to retell stories they have been told. This helps build vital vocabulary and confidence.

Overall, pupils achieve very well at this school. This prepares pupils at all stages for the next steps in their education. Teachers deliver the curriculum skilfully. They have strong subject knowledge because they receive excellent training and support. In some subjects, for example art and history, the school has identified the exact knowledge and skills that pupils need to know and remember. However, this is not always the case in the wider curriculum. Systematic teaching of mathematics in the early years supports children to develop numerical confidence and fluency quickly. Carefully structured activities deepen their understanding of number and shapes. In some subjects, such as phonics and mathematics, staff accurately check that pupils have learned key knowledge and skills. Such checks on pupils' learning in the wider curriculum are not as meticulous.

Pupils' behaviour and conduct are strong. They know that staff manage behaviour fairly and consistently. Sanctions are not seen as a punishment but as an opportunity for learning. When pupils fall short of leaders' high expectations, they work with the pastoral team to learn from their mistakes.

The wider personal development of pupils is a strength of the school. This is because of the thoughtful and coherent approach that the school takes. Pastoral care is strong. The school secures the best support for those who need it the most. Expert staff teach age-appropriate personal, social and health education (PSHE). Like many other aspects of the school, the PSHE curriculum is rooted in the school's values. A different value is the focus of each term. Pupils strive to demonstrate the 'Sutton six' values in all aspects of school life and gain house points for demonstrating them. Pupils delight in celebrating the cultural diversity and inclusivity of their school. A wide range of clubs enables pupils to develop skills and talents beyond the curriculum. Memorable trips and visits engage pupils and help to build their understanding of the world.

Staff are proud to work at the school. Strong collaboration between teachers and support staff contributes to the team ethos. Staff appreciate the consideration leaders give to well-being and workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subjects require further refinement. As a result, pupils' learning is not as deep as it could be in some aspects of the curriculum. The school should make sure that the curriculum is fully effective in all areas, including in how assessment is used to maximise pupils' achievement.

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 October 2012.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	109776
Local authority	Reading
Inspection number	10268892
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	666
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dave Dymond
Headteacher	Robert Howell
Website	www.alfredsuttonprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils about the quality of education and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors talked to a wide range of pupils and observed their behaviour in lessons and during social times.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the

extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders, staff and pupils. The lead inspector also met with parents at the start of the second day of the inspection.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of governors and representatives of the governing body. She scrutinised minutes of governing body meetings. She also spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation provided by the school. This included a wide range of policies, the school's self-evaluation and published information about pupils' performance.
- Inspectors considered responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, including free-text responses. They also took account of the responses to the staff survey and pupil survey and gathered the views of both staff and pupils throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Linda Culling, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Laura James

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023