

Inspection of Alder Tree Primary Academy

Potternewton Mount, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS7 2DR

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 November 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The principal of this school is Kate Burton. This school is part of White Rose Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Andrew Whitaker, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Stewart Harper.

What is it like to attend this school?

Alder Tree Primary Academy has high aspirations for every pupil, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school values, 'believe, belong, become', shine through daily life in school. They epitomise the school's determination that every pupil will reach their full potential.

The curriculum is wide and interesting, enriched with visits and experiences. These include visits to local museums and art galleries. As a result, pupils are keen to learn and achieve well.

Pupils are happy and safe. They enjoy learning and playing together. They trust the adults in school to look after them. The school's approach to managing behaviour is consistent and based on high expectations. Incidents of inappropriate behaviour or bullying have reduced considerably. They are now infrequent and dealt with effectively when they do happen.

The school provides a range of extra-curricular activities for pupils to enjoy. These include dance, boys' and girls' football, baking, cheerleading and the 'Young Voices' choir. The school values its strong links with the local community. Grandparents enjoy singing alongside pupils in the intergenerational choir. The school magazine, 'Alder Tree Times', is distributed throughout the local area.

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

The curriculum for every subject engages and interests pupils. They learn what it is to be a historian, an artist or a musician, for example, and the possible careers that each subject could lead to. Pupils recognise their own communities in the curriculum. In history, some pupils have learned about the 'Windrush Generation'. They were inspired by the local speaker, who talked to them about her experiences.

Teachers receive expert guidance and coaching. This helps them to plan lessons that build pupils' knowledge step by step. In many lessons, teachers check pupils' learning carefully. They provide immediate help where it is needed. However, the curriculum is not implemented consistently well across all subjects and classes. In some subjects, such as history, pupils talk knowledgeably about their learning. In subjects that are less well embedded, such as art and design, pupils are less able to recall prior learning. In mathematics, some pupils do not remember number facts correctly. This hinders their ability to solve mathematical calculations and problems.

Pupils enjoy reading. Staff read to them every day. In the early years, children enjoy the repeated refrains and rhyming language in books by well-known authors. Some children made puppets to act out the story of 'The Gruffalo'. The school has recently introduced a new phonics scheme to help more pupils get off to a secure start in reading. Staff deliver the phonics scheme with fidelity. Some pupils have additional phonic sessions every day. This helps them to keep up.

The early years curriculum is ambitious and designed to prepare children well for learning in Year 1. Children have opportunities to explore and practise new learning in familiar contexts, such as the home corner. Staff model play and set challenges for children. This helps them to develop positive attitudes to learning. For example, a group of children who had made a 'car wash' out of large wooden blocks were encouraged to listen carefully to each other.

Pupils with SEND achieve well from their individual starting points. Teachers receive detailed information about how to support each pupil effectively. The school works closely with external agencies to ensure that pupils' needs are met.

Pupils debate important issues with great maturity. They are encouraged to be proud of their own identities and cultures. They learn about the protected characteristics and show respect for others. They are clear about how this links to the school values and rules. There is a range of opportunities for pupils to experience leadership. The timetable coaches and reading buddies help other pupils with their learning. The anti-bullying ambassadors, the school council, the 'Alder Tree news crew', and the 'eco-power' group all have a positive impact on school life.

School leaders have brought about rapid and significant improvement. Pupils, parents and staff have remarked on the difference this work has made. The school encourages families to be involved in their children's learning. For example, grandparents are welcomed into school to read to classes.

Staff appreciate the training they receive and the consideration leaders and the trust have for their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The implementation of the intended curriculum is not consistent across all subjects and classes. Leaders should continue to provide support and coaching for teachers to ensure that curriculum implementation is consistently effective.
- Teachers do not always pick up misconceptions in mathematics. This contributes to the acquisition of incorrect number facts for some pupils. Leaders should strengthen teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics so they can quickly correct misconceptions.

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	147945
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10290373
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	308
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Stewart Harper
Principal	Kate Burton
Website	info@aldertreeprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Alder Tree Primary Academy became an academy school in November 2020 when it joined White Rose Academies Trust. When its predecessor school, Mill Field Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- The school provides a breakfast club and after-school childcare.
- The school currently uses two registered alternative providers for a very small minority of pupils.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- The inspectors had several meetings with the principal and other senior leaders during the inspection and met with the acting chief executive officer, the chair of trustees and members of the local accountability board.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, art and design, history, and personal, social, health and economic education. They 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.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour throughout the school day, including during lesson visits and at breaktimes.
- Pupils talked to the inspectors, formally and informally, about their learning, their views on behaviour and the wider experiences they receive at school.
- Records for behaviour and attendance were considered.
- The inspectors spoke with a number of parents in the playground and reviewed the responses received through Ofsted's survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses.

Inspection team

Janet Keefe, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sinead Fox	Ofsted Inspector
David Harrison	Ofsted Inspector

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